

Anglo-Saxon Studies

Episcopal Culture in Late
Anglo-Saxon England

MARY FRANCES GIANDREA

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EPISCOPAL CULTURE IN
LATE ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

This first full-length study of the Anglo-Saxon episcopate explores the activities of the bishops in a variety of arenas, from the pastoral and liturgical to the political, social, legal and economic, so tracing the development of a particularly English episcopal identity over the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries. It makes detailed use of the contemporary evidence, previously unexploited as diffuse, difficult and largely non-narrative, rather than that from after the Norman Conquest; because this avoids the prevailing monastic bias, it shows instead that differences in order [between secular and monk-bishops] had almost no effect on their attitudes toward their episcopal roles. It therefore presents a much more nuanced portrait of the episcopal church on the eve of the Conquest, a church whose members constantly worked to create a well-ordered Christian polity through the stewardship of the English monarchy and the sacralization of political discourse; an episcopate deeply committed to pastoral care and in-step with current continental liturgical and theological developments, despite later ideologically-charged attempts to suggest otherwise; and an institution intricately woven, because of its tremendous economic and political power, into the very fabric of English local and regional society.

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EPISCOPAL CULTURE IN LATE ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

Mary Frances Giandrea

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Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
List of abbreviations	x
Introduction	1
1 (Re)Writing History	7
2 The <i>Servitium Regis</i>	35
3 Cathedral Culture	70
4 Pastoral Care	98
5 Episcopal Wealth	124
6 Community and Authority	156
Epilogue	191
Appendix	201
Bibliography	217
Index	235

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For Pamela, Marilyn and Paul Smith and
Michael and David Giandrea

Abbreviations

<i>Admonition</i>	C&S, no. 55
<i>Anglo-Latin Literature</i>	<i>Anglo-Latin Literature, 900–1066</i> , ed. M. Lapidge (London, 1993)
<i>Anglo-Saxon History</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon History: Basic Readings</i> , ed. D. Pelteret (New York, 2000)
<i>Annales Monastici</i>	<i>Annales Monastici</i> , ed. H. R. Luard, RS 36 (London, 1864–9), 5 volumes
ANS	<i>Anglo-Norman Studies</i> (1983–); <i>Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies</i> before 1983
ASC	J. Earle and C. Plummer, <i>Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel</i> (2 vols., 1892, 1899); translation in <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Revised Translation</i> , ed. D. Whitelock, D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker (New Brunswick, NJ, 1961)
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i> (Cambridge, 1972–)
Barlow, <i>English Church I</i>	F. Barlow, <i>The English Church 1000–1066: A History of the Later Anglo-Saxon Church</i> (London, 1976)
Barlow, <i>English Church II</i>	F. Barlow, <i>The English Church 1066–1154: A History of the Anglo-Norman Church</i> (London, 1979)
<i>Belief and Culture</i>	<i>Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting</i> , ed. R. Gameson and K. Leyser (Oxford, 2001)
BIHR	<i>Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research</i>
Bishop Æthelwold	<i>Bishop Æthelwold. His Career and Influence</i> , ed. B. Yorke (Woodbridge, 1988)
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BL	British Library, London
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
“Booklists”	M. Lapidge, “Surviving booklists from Anglo-Saxon England,” in <i>Learning and Literature</i> , 33–90
Brooks, <i>Early History</i>	N. Brooks, <i>The Early History of the Church of Canterbury</i> (Leicester, 1984)
CH	<i>Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies. The First Series. Text</i> , ed. P. Clemoes, EETS Second Series 17 (Oxford, 1997); <i>The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church</i> , ed. B. Thorpe (New York, 1971 rpt), 2 volumes; <i>Homilies of Ælfric. A Supplementary Collection</i> , ed. J. C. Pope, EETS 259, 260 (1967–8).

Abbreviations

CHR	<i>Catholic Historical Review</i>
Chronicon. Ev.	<i>Chronicon Abbatiae de de Evesham</i> , ed. W. D. Macray, RS 29 (London, 1863)
Companion	<i>A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature</i> , ed. P. Pulsiano and E. Treharne (Oxford, 2001)
C&S	<i>Councils and Synods with other Documents Relating to the English Church</i> , vol. 1 AD 871–1204, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C. N. L. Brooke (1964)
Crawford Collection	<i>The Crawford Collection of Early Charters and Documents now in the Bodleian Library</i> , ed. A. S. Napier (Oxford, 1895)
DB	<i>Domesday Book, Facsimile Edition</i> , ed. R. Erskine and A. Williams (Cambridge, 1986)
De Obsessione	<i>De Obsessione Dunelmi</i> , in Symeon, I, 215–220; trans. in C. J. Morris, <i>Marriage and Murder in Eleventh-century Northumbria: A Study of the 'De Obsessione Dunelmi,'</i> Borthwick Paper 82 (York, 1992), 1–5
DM	<i>The Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury</i> , ed. D. C. Douglas (London, 1944)
ECE	<i>The Early Charters of Essex</i> , ed. C. Hart (Leicester, 1971)
ECNE	<i>The Early Charters of Northern England and the North Midlands</i> , ed. C. Hart (Leicester, 1975)
ECW	<i>The Early Charters of Wessex</i> , ed. H. P. R. Finberg (Leicester, 1964)
EER	<i>Encomium Emmae Reginae</i> , ed. A. Campbell with introduction by S. D. Keynes (Cambridge, 1998)
EETS	Early English Text Society
EHD	<i>English Historical Documents, Volume I, c. 500–1042</i> , ed. D. Whitelock (London, 1955); <i>Volume II, 1042–1189</i> , ed. D. Douglas and G. W. Greenaway (London, 1953)
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EME	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
England Before the Conquest	<i>England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock</i> , ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971)
England in the Eleventh Century	<i>England in the Eleventh Century</i> , ed. C. Hicks (Stamford, 1993)
Episcopus	C&S, no. 56
F	R. Fleming, <i>Domesday Book and the Law. Society and Legal Custom in Early Medieval England</i> (Cambridge, 1998)
G	H. Gneuss, <i>Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts. A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100</i> (Tempe, AZ, 2001)

Abbreviations

<i>Gesetze</i>	<i>Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen</i> , ed. and trans. (German) by F. Liebermann, vol. I (Halle, 1903; rpt. Aalen, 1960); laws cited by king and code; translations are from <i>Laws of the Earliest English Kings</i> , ed. F. L. Attenborough (New York, 1963) and <i>Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I</i> , ed. and trans. A. J. Robertson (Cambridge, 1925; rpt. New York, 1974)
GP	<i>Willelmi Malmesbiriensis Monachi de Gestis Pontificum Anglorum</i> , ed. N. E. S. A. Hamilton, RS 52 (London, 1870); William of Malmesbury, <i>The Deeds of the Bishops of England</i> , trans. D. Preest (Woodbridge, 2002)
GR	William of Malmesbury, <i>De Gestis Regum Anglorum</i> , ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998–1999)
HBS	Henry Bradshaw Society
HCY	<i>The Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops</i> , ed. J. Raine, RS 71 (London, 1886)
Hemming	<i>Hemingi Chartularium Ecclesiæ Wigorniensis</i> , ed. T. Hearne, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1723)
HE	<i>Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> , ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969; rev. edn 1990)
HH	Henry of Huntingdon, <i>Historia Anglorum</i> , ed. and trans. D. Greenway (Oxford, 1996)
<i>Historiola</i>	<i>Historiola de primordiis episcopatus Somersetensis</i> , in <i>Ecclesiastical Documents</i> , ed. J. Hunter (London, 1840), 9–28
HN	Eadmer, <i>Historia Novorum in Anglia</i> , ed. M. Rule, RS (London, 1884); trans. in G. Bosanquet, <i>Eadmer's History of Recent Events in England</i> (London, 1964)
<i>Homilies of Wulfstan</i>	<i>The Homilies of Wulfstan</i> , ed. D. Bethurum (Oxford, 1957).
HSC	<i>Historia de Sancto Cuthberto</i> , ed. T. Johnson South (Woodbridge, 2002)
HSJ	<i>Haskins Society Journal</i>
<i>Injunctions</i>	C&S, no. 54
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
JW	<i>Chronicle of John of Worcester, Vol. II: The Annals from 450 to 1066</i> , ed. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. J. Bray and P. McGurk (Oxford, 1995); <i>Vol. III: The Annals from 1067 to 1140 with the Gloucester Interpolations and the Continuation to 1141</i> , ed. and trans. P. McGurk (Oxford, 1998)

Abbreviations

<i>Learning and Literature</i>	<i>Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England. Studies presented to Peter Clemoes</i> , ed. M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985; rpt. 1987)
<i>LDE</i>	Symeon of Durham, <i>Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius hoc est Dunhelmensis, ecclesie</i> , ed. D. Rollason (Oxford, 2000)
<i>LE</i>	<i>Liber Eliensis</i> , ed. E. O. Blake (London, 1962)
<i>Libellus Æthelwoldi</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Ely: Records of Ely Abbey and its Benefactors in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries</i> , ed. and trans. S. Keynes and A. Kennedy (forthcoming)
<i>Liturgical Books</i>	<i>The Liturgical Books of Anglo-Saxon England</i> , ed. R. Pfaff (Kalamazoo, 1995)
<i>Liturgy</i>	<i>The Liturgy of the Late Anglo-Saxon Church</i> , ed. H. Gittos and M. Bedingfield, HBS, Subsidia 5 (London, 2005)
<i>LME</i>	C. A. Jones, <i>Ælfric's Letter to the Monks of Eynsham</i> (Cambridge, 1998)
<i>Napier</i>	<i>Wulfstan, Sammlung des ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien</i> , ed. A. S. Napier (Berlin, 1883)
<i>OEBO</i>	<i>The Benedictine Office: An Old English Text</i> , ed. J. M. Ure (Edinburgh, 1957)
<i>OEERC</i>	<i>The Old English Version of the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang</i> , ed. and trans. B. Langefeld (Bern, 2003)
<i>OV</i>	<i>The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis</i> , ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1969)
<i>Pastoral Care</i>	<i>Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England</i> , ed. F. Tinti (Woodbridge, 2005)
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Modern Language Association</i>
<i>Polity</i>	<i>Die "Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical," ein Werk Erzbischof Wulfstans von York</i> , ed. K. Jost, Swiss Studies in English, 47 (Bern, 1959). Translation in M. Swanton, <i>English Literature before Chaucer</i> (London, 1987).
<i>PRG</i>	<i>Romano-German Pontifical</i>
<i>RASC</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Charters</i> , ed. and trans. A. J. Robertson (Cambridge, 1939)
<i>Regesta</i>	<i>Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum</i> , ed. D. Bates (Oxford, 1998)
<i>Regularis concordia</i>	<i>The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of England</i> , ed. and trans. T. Symons (London, 1953)
<i>Rewriting Old English</i>	<i>Rewriting Old English in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries</i> , ed. M. Swan and E. Treharne (Cambridge, 2000)
<i>RS</i>	Rolls Series

Abbreviations

S	<i>Anglo-Saxon Charters. An Annotated List and Bibliography</i> , ed. P. Sawyer (London, 1968); together with online revised edition
SCH	<i>Studies in Church History</i>
SEHD	<i>Select English Historical Documents</i> , ed. F. Harmer (Cambridge, 1914)
Settimani	<i>Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo</i>
St Cuthbert	<i>St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community</i> , ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge, 1989)
St Dunstan	<i>St Dunstan: His Life, Times and Cult</i> , ed. N. Ramsay, M. Sparks, and T. Tatton-Brown (Woodbridge, 1992)
St Oswald	<i>St Oswald of Worcester. Life and Influence</i> , ed. N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (London, 1996)
Symeon	<i>Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia</i> , ed. T. Arnold, 2 vols, Rolls Series (1882–5)
T	E. Temple, <i>Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900–1066</i> (London, 1976)
Textus	<i>Textus Roffensis</i> , ed. P. Sawyer, 2 vols, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile, VII, IX (Copenhagen, 1957–62)
TRE	<i>Tempore Regis Edwardi</i> , ‘in the time of King Edward’
TRW	<i>Tempore Regis Willelmi</i> , ‘in the time of King William’
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
VÆR	<i>Vita Ædwardi Regis</i> , ed. and trans. by F. Barlow in <i>The Life of King Edward the Confessor</i> (Edinburgh, 1962; rpt 1992)
VCH	<i>Victoria History of the Counties of England</i>
VSÆ	<i>The Life of St Æthelwold</i> , ed. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1991)
VSD	<i>Vita Sancti Dunstani auctore B</i> in <i>Memorials of St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury</i> , ed. W. Stubbs, RS 63 (London, 1874), 3–52; <i>Vita Sancti Dunstani auctore Osbern</i> , 69–161; <i>William of Malmesbury Saints' Lives. Lives of Ss. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract</i> , ed. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson (Oxford, 2002) [references are to the <i>vitae</i> in the RS unless indicated]
VSO	<i>Vita Sancti Oswaldi archiepiscopi Eboracensis</i> , in <i>HCY</i> , I, 399–475
VSW	<i>William of Malmesbury Saints' Lives. Lives of Ss. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract</i> , ed. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson (Oxford, 2002); cited by book and chapter to correlate with earlier edition by R. R. Darlington

Abbreviations

<i>Waltham Chronicle</i>	<i>The Waltham Chronicle. An Account of the Discovery of Our Holy Cross at Montacute and its Conveyance to Waltham</i> , ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1994)
<i>Wills</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Wills</i> , ed. D. Whitelock (Cambridge, 1930)
<i>Writs</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Writs</i> , ed. F. Harmer (Manchester, 1959; rpt Stamford, 1989)
<i>WCLC</i>	<i>Wulfstan's Canon Law Collection</i> , ed. J. E. Cross and A. Hamer (Cambridge, 1999)
<i>Wulfstan, Archbishop of York</i>	<i>Wulfstan, Archbishop of York. The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference</i> , ed. M. Townend (Turnhout, 2004)

Introduction

Between 900 and 1100 England experienced a variety of political, social and economic transformations, the effects of which have quite rightly dominated its historiography ever since. Unification followed by the renewal of Viking activity in the tenth century, and Cnut's conquest in the early eleventh, are only overshadowed in the historiography of the period by the events of the Norman Conquest later in the eleventh, a rupture whose completeness is poignantly reflected in the Domesday phrase "when King Edward was alive and dead." In addition to these momentous events, tenth and eleventh-century English men and women had to contend with famine, disease, rebellion and other calamities, not to mention the turn of the first millennium which, if it had anywhere near the same impact as the turn of the second, was no small cause for alarm. Although England certainly experienced periods of peace and prosperity in the last century and a half of Anglo-Saxon rule, the weight of evidence suggests that these were centuries of deep uncertainty to say the least.

That we know as much as we do about the transformations of the tenth and eleventh centuries is due primarily to English churchmen, who, for all intents and purposes, maintained the institutional memory of the English people in this period. Many of our sources, including the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which provides the basic shape of early medieval English political history; Domesday Book, which bears witness to the political, social and economic turmoil of the Norman Conquest; and charters, which document the expression and expansion of royal as well as ecclesiastical authority, to name but a few, were either written by churchmen or survive largely because they were archived by them. There is no need to dwell here on the sources for Anglo-Saxon political history except to say that enough contemporary material survives to construct a coherent narrative upon which most historians can agree.¹

Given its role as chief repository of memory, it is deeply ironic that the same cannot be said for the Church. Historians do not agree on some fairly basic aspects of late Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical history, including how far the parish system had advanced by 1066 and whether the ideology of monastic reform was as successful in practice as it was in theory. Moreover, we lack entire classes of evidence crucial to the study of an institution like the Church, such as bishops' registers, which are a slightly later phenomenon, and conciliar material in the

¹ Useful surveys include P. Stafford, *Unification and Conquest: A History of England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (London, 1989); H. R. Loyn, *Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest* (New York, 1963; rpt 1991); A. Williams, *The English and the Norman Conquest* (Woodbridge, 1995); and B. Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation: The Normans in Britain 1066–1100* (New York, 1994; rpt 2001).

Introduction

format recognizable from before and after this period. More devastating still, it is not even possible to reconstruct an exact chronology of bishops for all sees in the tenth and eleventh centuries. And even where we do have names and dates, most tenth and eleventh-century bishops and abbots are absolutely unknown to us in any meaningful way, including archbishops who were not made saints and therefore inspired no *vitae*. We are left, then, knowing surprisingly little about either the institution or its members. Scholars of homiletic literature, poetry, liturgy, manuscript illumination, codicology and related fields have been busy excavating the mental worlds of the Church in recent decades, and they have advanced our knowledge of the Church considerably. For reasons generally beyond our control, however, historians have been less successful in establishing a firm context for this activity.

This is not to say, of course, that the Church as a whole has suffered from neglect. Henry Loyn's short survey of the later Anglo-Saxon Church joined Frank Barlow's now quarter-century-old survey in 2000, and in the last ten years, historical studies of individual bishops and their communities have appeared with increasing frequency.² It remains the case, however, that the history of the late Anglo-Saxon episcopate as a whole has never been the subject of a full-length study until now. Why this should be so is not immediately obvious, but as one might imagine, it has largely to do with the nature of the extant evidence. While some 700 manuscripts survive from the tenth and eleventh centuries, they are predominantly records of the Church's intellectual, liturgical, and devotional activities, records that survived because their contents continued to resonate through the centuries or because they were valuable objects in their own right.³ More prosaic records and texts did not survive the Conquest in any great number because the foreign bishops William the Conqueror imposed on the Church had different ways of doing things and a different language in which to do them. It is, of course, debatable whether pre-twelfth-century churchmen ever produced large numbers of records. What is certain, however, is that entire Anglo-Saxon cathedral archives, such as those at North Elmham, Lichfield, and Dorchester, all sees that were moved after the Conquest, did not survive, while fire consumed others. At the same time, because so many manuscripts cannot be localized or firmly dated, they tell us precious little in the way of details about Anglo-Saxon sees, their bishops, episcopal administration of the dioceses, or even pastoral care. The corpus occasionally tells us what some bishops were reading and thinking, but very little about what they were doing, and still less about who they were and where they came from. Apart from a handful of *vitae*, which by their very nature

² Barlow, *English Church I*; H. R. Loyn, *The English Church, 940–1154* (New York, 2000); Bishop Æthelwold; E. Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester, c. 1008–1095* (Oxford, 1990); *St Dunstan; St Oswald*; M. F. Smith, "Archbishop Stigand and the eye of the needle," *ANS* 16 (1994), 199–219; V. King, "Ealdred of York: the Worcester years," *ANS* 18 (1996), 123–37; S. Keynes, "Giso, bishop of Wells (1061–88)," *ANS* 19 (1997), 203–71; and E. Treharne, "Producing a library in late Anglo-Saxon England," *The Review of English Studies* 54 (2003), 155–72 [for Leofric], among others.

³ See H. Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, 2001). For books as treasure, see D. Dumville, "Anglo-Saxon books: treasure in Norman hands?" *ANS* 16 (1994), 83–99.

Introduction

present only idealized versions of their subjects' lives, and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which is frustratingly idiosyncratic and generally devoid of useful elements such as causation, motivation and character development, the kind of narrative evidence upon which historians typically depend is almost completely absent from our corpus of sources.⁴

Even in terms of mentalities, however, the evidence often presents more problems than it solves. A disproportionate amount comes from the two large sees of Canterbury and Winchester, and to a lesser extent Worcester, and if this were not problematic enough, these sees were monastic cathedrals by the eleventh century. Bishop Æthelwold, as is well known, had taken the unusual step of removing the canons from Winchester in the last quarter of the tenth century and replacing them with monks, a move that was eventually followed at Canterbury, Worcester and Sherborne. Monk-bishops reigned at all cathedrals for several decades, but by the second quarter of the eleventh century, secular bishops were making a comeback. Because of the predominance of Canterbury, Winchester and Worcester in the production and preservation of texts, however, the secular church is in many ways a shadow institution in the historiography of the later Anglo-Saxon Church.⁵

The evidentiary problems sketched above are serious enough without the Norman Conquest thrown into the mix. Periodization is a necessary historical tool, but because it is predicated on change, it can blind us to continuities, particularly in cases where labels have been applied too broadly. The English Church in the eleventh century is a good case in point. The Norman Conquest was an important event in English ecclesiastical as well as political life, to be sure. Foreign-born, though not always Norman, bishops and abbots came to replace English ones, liturgical and other local customs were modified to some degree, and ancient locations were abandoned in favor of new urban centers. But thinking about the English Church in terms of the great divide, before and after the Conquest, has made it too easy for historians to make the Normans the agents of change by default rather than digging deeper for signs of change already underway. Removing the Conquest from the equation helps to illuminate the broader transformations taking place across the Christian West in the eleventh century, most of which owed their inspiration to the Roman curia, and not to ducal bishops or abbots.

Each of the strands discussed above – the dearth of contemporary sources, particularly narrative sources, the dominance of the Benedictine mentality, and the tendency to think of the English Church either in pre- or post-Conquest rather than eleventh-century terms – is a serious problem in its own right. Together, however, they are devastating in the anachronistic picture they encourage. The historiography of the late Anglo-Saxon Church in general, and the episcopal Church in particular, has been shaped by one or more of these strands. The lack of

⁴ See C. Clark, "The narrative mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest," in *England Before the Conquest*, 225–35 and S. Keynes, "The declining reputation of Æthelred the Unready," in *Anglo-Saxon History*, 158–70.

⁵ Likewise, because reform polemic makes religious culture appear so homogeneous, local religious culture is nearly invisible (J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), 353–4).

Introduction

contemporary narrative evidence, for example, has often led scholars to take later narrative too much at face value. Frank Barlow, Henry Loyn and Emma Mason, for instance, all rely to one degree or another on Anglo-Norman views in their assessments of the Anglo-Saxon Church in general and the construction of holiness in particular. Toppling giants (or at least taking shots at them) is a commonplace of introductions, and I do not wish to suggest that these works are not still important. Rather, what is proposed here is to take a new and more comprehensive approach to an old problem, or a series of old problems, presented by the sources described above.

Because the purpose of this book is to present as wide-ranging a picture of the episcopal Church as possible, it will not consider any one individual or community in any depth. In the interest of brevity, little attention will be paid to the development of saints' cults, which merits separate treatment, or underlying political changes, except insofar as both impacted on episcopal mentalities. Something should also be said about the chronological parameters of this study. Although this book is ostensibly about the tenth and eleventh centuries, the evidence tends to be concentrated in pockets, particularly the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. While it is obvious that broad generalizations formed from such idiosyncratic and often anecdotal evidence demand a slew of accompanying caveats, it is nevertheless possible to say more about the Anglo-Saxon episcopal Church using this evidence as well as some of the more reliable later sources than has been said before. This book thus seeks to illuminate the various worlds, physical and mental, in which its members lived and worked.

The first and last chapters are not about the Anglo-Saxon Church *per se*, but about later eleventh and twelfth-century mentalities, and they address many of the historiographical and evidentiary issues discussed here. Chapter 1 examines the conventions governing the writing of history in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries, conventions that led to the fashioning of an Anglo-Saxon past that was often more fictitious than factual. It further considers how the refashioned version has crept into the modern historiography of the Anglo-Saxon Church. The epilogue briefly discusses the aftermath of the Conquest, revisiting the idea of "reform" as an interpretive lens and considering the question of continuity. The core of this book is an exploration, in five chapters, of the concurrent spheres of influence – royal and diocesan, spiritual and legal, social and economic – in which all medieval bishops operated. Although many of the bishops' activities defy easy classification, some organizing principle must prevail in a study that seeks to make sense of Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care* in the same breath as Domesday Book.

Chapter 2 surveys first the contemporary attitudes of late Anglo-Saxon bishops, so far as they can be determined, to their secular responsibilities and then examines the role of the episcopate in the formation and direction of Christian kingship through consecration and a variety of other predominantly royal activities. Here it is argued that English churchmen sought not to abjure their political duties, which they came to understand in pastoral terms, but to approach them with the proper frame of mind. Chapter 3 focuses on the culture of the late Anglo-Saxon cathedrals, where most bishops spent the majority of their time. I

Introduction

have attempted to say something useful about liturgical life in the cathedral chapters, in particular the secular chapters, as well as cathedral education. Although not without its own interpretive problems, the evidence examined in this chapter hints at a wider participation by cathedral communities in the liturgy of the Hours, as well as a greater awareness of Continental developments than historians have heretofore acknowledged. The pastoral responsibilities of bishops in their dioceses are the focus of chapter 4, which draws heavily on recent studies of pontifical and other liturgies. This chapter argues, primarily on the manuscript evidence, that pastoral care was alive and well in late Anglo-Saxon England.

As custodians of the Church's patrimony, Anglo-Saxon bishops were also men of kingdom-wide, regional and local importance, and in many cases of quite considerable importance. According to my calculations, the episcopal Church controlled something on the order of 10 percent of the kingdom's landed wealth on the eve of Conquest, which, even granting errors, is likely to be underestimated. Chapter 5 explores the dimensions of episcopal economic power in terms of the lands they acquired, from both royal and lay donors, the strategies they employed to acquire them, and the alternatives they sought when grants of land were in short supply. The discussion demonstrates, for example, how deeply indebted episcopal communities were to early Anglo-Saxon kings for their endowments, even as late as 1066. It also situates bishops and their communities in the major economic transformations of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Chapter 6 considers how diocesan authority was woven into the fabric of local society in ways only tangentially related to either landholding or pastoral care: by commemorating local dead in exchange for donations, keeping records of transactions and others matters of importance to lay men and women, and by cultivating local and regional affinities, to name but a few. Although they highlight the depth and breadth of episcopal involvement in diocesan life, these chapters also underscore the *ad hoc* manner in which episcopal power was accumulated and projected in the dioceses in this period. In other words, the networks of relationships that comprised episcopal involvement in local society depended, by and large, on the power and charisma of individual bishops rather than on the strength of the Church as an institution.

When all is said and done, the picture that emerges is still flawed in some very obvious ways. It is still not possible to talk about a "typical" Anglo-Saxon bishop given the patchiness of the contemporary evidence. The picture is still unavoidably skewed toward the communities that preserved the sources. And, as always, making the leap from text to practice is problematic. But there is something to be said for bringing the contemporary evidence, however difficult and diffuse it is, together in one place. In the end, however, this book seeks to make a greater contribution, and that is to challenge some of the orthodoxies only encouraged by the nature of the evidence. Besides the fact that eleventh-century Norman and twelfth-century Anglo-Norman monks make poor witnesses to the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church, a straightforward reading of the contemporary English evidence suggests that the impact of both the Benedictine Reform and the Norman Conquest needs to be reevaluated if we are to get any closer to understanding the worlds of the late Anglo-Saxon bishop. In short, we need to stop

Introduction

thinking about religious transformation in terms of reform and think about it in terms of change, which, as Maureen Miller has suggested, is a much less judgmental way of conceptualizing it.⁶ In this study, greater weight is given to the agency of bishops, whether it was in the construction of an ideology suitable to hegemonic Christian kingship, the commitment of the energy and vitality of Benedictine spirituality to pastoral care, or the active participation of diocesans in local economic, judicial and military affairs. The English Church on the eve of the Conquest still retained much of the enthusiasm and dynamism of a missionary Church, which is why so many of its traditions continued to dominate spiritual life, particularly at the local level, well into the twelfth century.

⁶ M. C. Miller, *The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950–1150* (Ithaca, 1993).

(Re)Writing History

HISTORICAL writing was a literary genre in the Middle Ages, and while most modern historians have come to recognize the importance of literary theory in the decoding of medieval chronicles, historians of the Anglo-Saxon Church have been less successful in applying that theory to texts.¹ As the introduction argued, the most prolific of the English Church's modern commentators have exhibited a marked preference for post-Conquest chronicles over the piecemeal, often non-narrative Anglo-Saxon evidence, despite the growing body of literature that has argued persuasively against such an approach. In her book on thirteenth-century historical writing in Flanders, Gabrielle Spiegel reminds us that

especially in the Middle Ages, historical writing, precisely to the degree that it claimed to be free of imaginative elaboration, served as a vehicle of ideological elaboration. The prescriptive authority of the past made it a privileged locus for working through the ideological implications of social changes in the present and the repository of contemporary concerns and desires.²

In other words, medieval historians made use of the past not to elucidate it for its own sake – a thoroughly modern conception of the purpose of historical writing – but to assert an ideology or ideologies of contemporary relevance. As literary products the creation of which was driven by contemporary concerns and the composition of which was governed by a series of contemporary conventions, these later chronicles tell us much that is useful about the world in which they were written, but, to varying degrees, surprisingly little of use about the past.³ Yet eminent historians continue to embrace their viewpoints rather uncritically, while others fail to appreciate the significance of the monastic lens through which most medieval writers interpreted both the past and the present.⁴ This chapter undermines many of the prevailing assumptions in the modern literature by first

¹ The body of literature on the subject is growing rapidly. See for example G. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: the Rise of Vernacular Prose History in Thirteenth Century France* (Berkeley, 1993), L. Shopkow, *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington, DC, 1997), and E. Albu, *The Normans in their Histories: Propaganda, Myth and Subversion* (Woodbridge, 2001).

² Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 5.

³ The obvious exception is the universal chronicle of John of Worcester. Composed between c. 1124 and 1140, this collection of annals is based on a now-lost version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that went up to 1130 (A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England from c. 500 to 1300* (London, 1974), 144–5).

⁴ See D. Townsend, “Anglo-Latin hagiography and the Norman transition,” *Exemplaria* 3 (1991), 401–2 and M. Otter, “1066: the moment of transition in two narratives of the Norman Conquest,” *Speculum* 74 (1999), 565–86.

Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England

discussing the conventions that governed the writing of history in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and then using these conventions to decode several of the more influential post-Conquest texts. Although it focuses on representatives of three different twelfth-century viewpoints – William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis and Henry of Huntingdon – this chapter is not meant to be an exhaustive study of their lives, works or thoughts.⁵ Nor is it meant to be a definitive treatment of medieval historical writing; rather, it considers only those elements that have a bearing on the writing of pre-Conquest episcopal history. Not only does this analysis set the stage for a more critical evaluation of the Anglo-Saxon Church based as much as possible on contemporary sources, which is the purpose of this book, but it further reveals just how long a shadow the Norman Conquest cast upon English historiography, influencing the way historians think even in the twenty-first century.

Source Criticism

One of the principal reasons for the reliance of modern historians on twelfth-century narrative sources, as we have seen, is the relative paucity of similar pre-Conquest sources. The late Anglo-Saxon period fell between two great periods of historical output: the late tenth and twelfth centuries. The former saw the proliferation of devotional and liturgical materials reflecting the ethos of the monastic reform period in England and the latter an explosion of historical and administrative materials reflecting the intellectual foment of the so-called twelfth-century renaissance. These were, relatively speaking, fertile periods in terms of sources. The same cannot be said, however, for the late Anglo-Saxon period as a whole. There is, of course, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but it generally lacks the literary quality of the later texts.⁶ The remaining sources for this period – primarily charters, wills, writs, obit lists, inventories and Domesday Book – are overwhelmingly practical in nature and are non-narrative, at least in relation to chronicles. Based to some extent on the predominance of administrative sources in the extant corpus, late Anglo-Saxon literary and spiritual achievements have been judged inferior to those of the twelfth century. But the impact of the Conquest on native Anglo-Saxon historical writing has not received enough attention. While there were plenty of churchmen around twenty years or so after the death of the last monastic reformer, men in a position to commemorate the great ecclesiastical figures of their youth, the same cannot be said for the last English bishops. The Norman Conquest of the English Church was as ruthless as it was thorough, and few could have been in any position to commemorate the

⁵ For more detailed studies, see N. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago and London, 1977), chapter I and *passim*; R. Thomson, *William of Malmesbury* (Woodbridge, 1987); M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1984); and Albu, *Normans in their Histories*, 180–212.

⁶ See below, 12–13.

lives of pre-Conquest bishops.⁷ Thus the kinds of sources that would have contributed to a more balanced portrait of the Anglo-Saxon Church then and now simply do not exist.

Indeed, it appears that even in the twelfth century relatively few Anglo-Saxon sources were available to historians. Anglo-Norman writers relied primarily on Bede, the eighth-century Northumbrian monk, for the early period; a version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for events beginning with King Alfred's reign; the historian Marianus Scotus for Continental affairs; a variety of saints' lives, and, on occasion, one another's histories.⁸ Some twelfth-century historians did incorporate non-narrative sources such as charters, writs and synodical *acta*, but they rarely interpreted them.⁹ It is likely that Anglo-Norman historians were considerably less well informed than we would like to think. William of Malmesbury's occasional petulance with his informants, both English and Norman, illustrates that in the twelfth century the "truth" of Anglo-Saxon history was still being worked out. The story of Earl Godwine's death is a case in point. About the demise of this central figure in English political and religious affairs, William of Malmesbury writes that "it is these differences of opinion which, as I have said, put my narrative at risk, since I cannot decide what precisely is the truth, either from the natural division between the two nations or because the fact is that the English are scornful of any superior and the Normans cannot endure an equal."¹⁰ William further expressed his exasperation with the availability and quality of sources when he wrote: "in my present work, however, I have been almost completely without help, groping in the thick darkness of ignorance and without any lamp of history to hold before me and direct my path."¹¹ Even though William was occasionally upfront about the evidentiary problems that threatened to undermine him, his periodic admissions have had curiously little impact on the way modern historians have mined his works for specific nuggets of information.

William of Malmesbury's inability to get his hands on reliable sources within a couple of generations of the Conquest reflects the seriousness of the event's impact on the Church's corporate memory. Although some historians have recently backed away from the notion that the Normans suppressed native ecclesiastical practices,¹² it is still the case that the campaign to Normanize the English Church, spearheaded by Archbishop Lanfranc, had a disastrous effect on some

⁷ The exception, of course, is Wulfstan, the last Anglo-Saxon bishop of Worcester, whose *vita* was first written by the Worcester monk, Coleman, before being revised by William of Malmesbury.

⁸ For an overview, see Gransden, *Historical Writing*, chapters 8–10.

⁹ Historians interested in pre-Conquest texts were John of Worcester, Eadmer and, to some extent, William of Malmesbury (Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 139–40; J. Campbell, "Some twelfth-century views of the Anglo-Saxon past," in his *Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London, 1986), 214).

¹⁰ *GR*, §198.

¹¹ *GP*, prologue. Later, in his discussion of St Rumonus, William writes that "... his exploits are mere beautiful adornments from the writing desk, there being no documentary evidence to support an opinion. You will find the same thing in many places in England besides Tavistock, just a bare list of names of saints and a record of any miracles they may have accomplished. I suppose that all knowledge of their deeds has been destroyed by the attacks of their enemies" (*GP*, §95).

¹² For a review of the literature *pro* and *contra*, see P. Hayward, "Gregory the Great as 'Apostle of the English' in post-Conquest Canterbury," *JEH* 55 (2004), note 1.

communities and their traditions. The most obvious results of suppression appear in liturgical and para-liturgical manuscripts written after the Conquest. At Canterbury, Rochester and St Albans, for instance, Lanfranc imposed Continental liturgical practices according to a monastic rulebook he himself compiled.¹³ To the extent that he was successful, it is now much more difficult to illuminate pre-Conquest liturgical practices on the basis of the surviving evidence. At Worcester, though, resistance took the form of the continued production of texts in Old English, so the effect of Normanization was obviously uneven.¹⁴

While the impact of the imposition of new liturgical forms on various English communities can be evaluated, to some extent, straightforwardly, the effects of other efforts to rewrite the corporate memory of these communities are more difficult to determine. Robin Fleming's study of Canterbury's obituary lists, for example, indicates that the pre-Conquest necrologies were painstakingly pruned, in the post-Conquest period, of benefactors the Normans deemed unworthy.¹⁵ Such manipulation makes it extremely difficult to reconstitute pre-Conquest spiritual and social relationships, among other things. The *Liber Vitae* of the episcopal see of Durham appears to have undergone similar revision.¹⁶ Liturgical calendars were also subject to tampering after the Conquest. Although most were ultimately reinstated, several revered Canterbury saints, including Ælfheah and Dunstan, were nearly demoted forever.¹⁷ Tampering could, of course, work in the reverse. As Jay Rubenstein has recently shown, Eadmer of Canterbury sought to bolster his community's stature by elevating the liturgical status of several Anglo-Saxon prelates, including Archbishop Oda, who were not commemorated before the Conquest.¹⁸ Evidence of the conscious refashioning of the history of an episcopal community like Canterbury begs the question of how significantly other sources of Anglo-Saxon episcopal history may have been altered or destroyed, not necessarily because they were deemed subversive but because they were no longer considered relevant. In other words, the sources most Anglo-Norman historians used – including calendars, obits and charters – were possibly already at least one step removed from their originals by the twelfth century. Even before considering how the Anglo-Saxon past was reshaped to suit particular

¹³ *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, ed. D. Knowles and C. N. L. Brooke (Oxford, 2002). That Lanfranc consciously tried to suppress English liturgy is suggested by the fact that his *Constitutions* were based on Cluniac practices, and show no interest in the *Regularis concordia*, the embodiment of English monastic culture, at least two copies of which were available at contemporary Canterbury (A. Gransden, "Traditionalism and continuity during the last century of Anglo-Saxon monasticism," *JEH* 40 (1989), 198).

¹⁴ See E. Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester* (Oxford, 1990), chapter 8.

¹⁵ See R. Fleming, "History and liturgy at pre-Conquest Christ Church," *HSJ* 6 (1994), 67–83.

¹⁶ *Liber Vitae Dunelmensis*, ed. A. H. Thompson, Surtees Society 136 (1923). A new edition is forthcoming, and a companion volume of essays edited by D. Rollason, A. J. Piper and M. Harvey, *Durham Liber Vitae and Its Context* (Woodbridge, 2004) is now available.

¹⁷ See D. Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1989), 220–33; S. Ridyard, "Condigna veneratio: post-Conquest attitudes to saints of the Anglo-Saxons," *ANS* 9 (1987), 179–206; R. Pfaff, "Lanfranc's supposed purge of the Anglo-Saxon calendar," in *Warriors and Churchmen*, ed. Reuter, 95–108; and J. Rubenstein, "Liturgy against history: the competing visions of Lanfranc and Eadmer of Canterbury," *Speculum* 74 (1999), 279–309.

¹⁸ Rubenstein, "Liturgy against history," 306–7.

purposes, then, we have to acknowledge the likelihood that some poetic license resulted from a sheer lack of knowledge and not necessarily a desire to mislead readers.

Literary Conventions

As a literary genre, historical writing was subject to the same conventions that regulated other literary forms in the Middle Ages. As Nancy Partner has noted, the distinction between fiction and history was purely a matter of content – as might be expected, historical writing was about real events and fiction was not. This seems obvious enough until one realizes that the prescribed literary form and intellectual approach were the same in both cases. In other words, “there was nothing in literary tradition or contemporary thought to suggest that history required a new and special mode of discourse.”¹⁹ The implications of this statement are more than a little disconcerting to those who seek the truth in medieval historiography; what is written, Partner reminds us, need not be true and verifiable to be historical and, conversely, everything that happened need not be included. Thus only the conventions themselves provide any clues to the reliability of the accounts.

Like the categorization of medieval chronicles, their shape and organization also jar the sensibilities of modern readers. Erich Auerbach’s seminal work of literary criticism, *Mimesis*, first forced literary critics and historians in the 1950s to confront systematically the problems of narrative structure and theme in medieval historiography. Auerbach noticed a fundamental shift from classical literary conventions to those adopted in the late-Antique period and refined over the course of the Middle Ages, conventions which called for a new prosaic, noncausal, and seemingly naive style – V. H. Galbraith’s “one damn thing after another.”²⁰ The adoption of parataxis, or, as Partner defines it, “the juxtaposition of essentially equal elements without causal or temporal connectives and without the subordination of one element or another,” was the primary manifestation of this change.²¹ In the classical period parataxis was considered a low style, applicable only to comedy; hypotaxis, in contrast, was considered the only vehicle suitable for “sublime subject matter.” According to Auerbach, however, the classical convention of the separation of high and low styles, characterized by the use of hypotactic syntax for lofty subjects and paratactic syntax for common ones, gave way in the late-Antique period to a mixture of styles. The inspiration for this mixture of styles, at once simple and dramatic, was the Vulgate: *Dixitque Deus: fiat lux, et facta est lux.*²²

The shift from the use of hypotaxis to parataxis in the treatment of the sublime

¹⁹ Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 195–6.

²⁰ E. Auerbach, *Mimesis*, trans. S. Trask (Princeton, 1953), chapter 3. Galbraith is paraphrased in Partner, who notes that he put it a bit more politely in 1944 (Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 194).

²¹ Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 197.

²² Auerbach, *Mimesis*, 61–2; Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 198.

corresponded to what Partner has described as a “more grave concession of classical rationality to a providential, figural conception of history.”²³ In other words, parataxis was not simply the expression of a change in literary taste, but the acknowledgement of the classical convention’s failure to adequately capture the Christian conception of Divine Providence. On the one hand, how could the classical high style capture the realistic humanity of Christ when that convention had no room for either realism or the lowborn?²⁴ But at a deeper level, hypotaxis was incapable of handling an entirely new conception of historical time. Auerbach offers the illustration of the sacrifice of Isaac, which prefigured the sacrifice of Christ, a connection that is neither temporal nor causal but linked only vertically by Divine Providence.²⁵ Since the application of the figural interpretation of history to the most mundane aspects of life was difficult at best, what developed in the Middle Ages was, in effect, an over-reaction which Auerbach defined as a “passive observation, resigned acceptance, or active exploitation of whatever chanced to occur in the world of practical events – raw material which was absorbed in its rawest form.”²⁶ Authorial control vanished in the face of the figural interpretation of history: either everything had temporal meaning or nothing did.²⁷ With little room left for interpretation on the part of the writer, medieval historical writing took on the characteristic of appearing uninterested in literary elements such as causation and motivation.

While the significance of the shift from hypotaxis to parataxis is clear enough, it must be acknowledged that writers often follow conventions simply because they are fashionable. For late-Antique theologians like Jerome and Augustine, who were concerned with finding the appropriate language for expressing the Christian experience, the psychological and philosophical implications were paramount. But for someone like the compiler John of Worcester, it is more likely that the literary conventions that developed out of these considerations more profoundly guided his writing. There was always some flexibility in the way that writers adopted conventions. In other words, parataxis may have dominated historical writing in the Middle Ages, but it was neither slavishly nor systematically followed. Even the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* diverges on occasion from its laconic, annalistic format to include rhetorical flourishes, such as personal opinion and demonstrations of party allegiance, elements more common to modern than medieval historical writing. As Cecily Clark demonstrated in 1971, compilers show far more interest after the year 991 in the motives of their subjects, and are increasingly more willing to “pass judgment on them” than ever before.²⁸ In his analysis of the Parker Chronicle’s treatment of Æthelred’s reign, Simon Keynes picks up where Clark left off, arguing that what appears to be the

²³ Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 200.

²⁴ Auerbach, *Mimesis*, 63.

²⁵ Auerbach, *Mimesis*, 64–5.

²⁶ The horizontal link became “wholly superfluous as soon as earthly relations of place, time and cause had ceased to matter, as soon as a vertical connection, ascending from all that happens, converging in God, alone became significant” (Auerbach, *Mimesis*, 65).

²⁷ Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 201.

²⁸ Clark, “The narrative mode,” 225–35.

typical annalistic format of the chronicle is in fact, for these years, a carefully constructed set-piece written sometime between 1016 and 1023. A source of dubious worth was then, he shows, embraced by William of Malmesbury, who combined it with “his own fertile imagination,” resulting in Æthelred’s poor reputation.²⁹ Like the compilers of one of his primary sources, William of Malmesbury also worked within the bounds of convention, but his work shows a far greater interest in hypotactic syntax than that of his contemporary, Henry of Huntingdon. Parataxis nevertheless continues to govern the overall construction of medieval chronicles, book by book and episode by episode.

One need not, however, divorce completely the literary from the philosophical. The figural interpretation of history, it seems to me, is explicit in Anglo-Norman historiography from the narrative structure employed to the judgments made about human sin and divine retribution. Prefiguration, for example, a common convention, has both narrative and thematic dimensions in medieval chronicles. Consider the following rationale for the Conquest: “the truth of Wulfstan’s prophecy shone clear: such was the weakness of the wretched people that after the first battle they never again tried to rise with a common purpose to assert their liberty, as though with Harold the whole strength of the land had fallen away.”³⁰ As a literary technique, prefiguration provided causality without sacrificing parataxis, but on the thematic level it also illustrates the medieval understanding of God’s intimate role in human events.³¹

Like prefiguration, the juxtaposition of supernatural events, such as comets, with significant human events was a literary device with both narrative and thematic functions. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is full of these portents, and the writers who based their histories on its various recensions incorporated the supernatural elements without hesitation. Evidence of a God who makes his displeasure known through supernatural phenomena fit very well with contemporary literary as well as theological expectations. Readers were meant to learn from the mistakes of those who came before them and to recognize the significance of prophecies and portents; thus historical writing in the twelfth century served a fundamentally didactic purpose. William of Malmesbury, for one, believed that history “adds flavour to moral instruction by imparting a pleasurable knowledge of past events, spurring the reader by the accumulation of examples to follow the good and shun the bad.”³² Henry of Huntingdon, conscious of writing a more secular history, hoped that “in this work the attentive reader will find what to imitate and what to reject, and if, by God’s help, he becomes a better person for

²⁹ Keynes, “The declining reputation,” 158–70.

³⁰ VSW, ii, §1.

³¹ Dunstan’s prophecy of the destruction of the English because of Æthelred’s complicity in the murder of his brother was a popular story. It also gave William of Malmesbury an opportunity to have a little fun at Æthelred’s expense: “His worthlessness had already been foretold by Dunstan, warned by a filthy token of it: when as a baby he was being plunged in the font at his christening with the bishops standing round, he interrupted the sacrament by opening his bowels, at which Dunstan was much concerned – ‘By God and His Mother’, he said, ‘he will be a wastrel when he is a man’” (GR, §164).

³² GR, prologue to Book II.

this emulation and avoidance, that will be for me the reward I most desire.”³³ That historical writing served an edificatory purpose was, of course, a *topos*, but it does reflect the historians’ concern for the salvation of their readers, prospects for which they hoped to improve by offering salutary models.³⁴

Common literary conventions and figural interpretations may have guided medieval historiography, but they were merely the framework upon which something more significant was built. After all, no two Anglo-Norman histories are exactly the same, despite their adherence to relatively uniform conventions. Their substantive differences result from a variety of factors personal and social, conscious and unconscious. As Gabrielle Spiegel articulates:

All texts occupy determinate social spaces, both as products of the social world of authors and as textual agents at work in that world, with which they entertain often complex and contestatory relations. Texts both mirror and generate social realities, are constituted by *and* constitute social and discursive formations, which they may sustain, resist, contest, or seek to transform depending on the individual case.³⁵

Historical writing is thus encoded with the experiences of the writer, which means that historical context must be considered along with the conventions dictating its form.

Historical Context

One of the contentions of this chapter is that the historians who have influenced the modern historiography of the English Church, particularly William of Malmesbury, are even more problematic because they stretched the limits of the genre in which they wrote. They were also representatives of a world in tremendous flux, in terms not just of politics and religion, but of society and the economy as well. The cumulative effect of these pressures on the writing of history after the Norman Conquest should not be underestimated. While this event exercised the most obvious influence, and as a result has attracted the most attention, it was perhaps not even the most significant factor. This section therefore examines the impact of these broader social and economic changes on the historical imagination of the twelfth century, changes often overshadowed by the events of 1066. It should also be noted that many of the house histories and cartularies, which often contain authentic Anglo-Saxon evidence, were produced at roughly the same time.

³³ About the genre of historical writing, Henry writes: “I believe the splendour of historical writing is to be cherished with the greatest delight and given the pre-eminent and most glorious position. For nothing is more excellent in this life than to investigate and become familiar with the course of worldly events. Where does the grandeur of valiant men shine more brightly, or the wisdom of the prudent, or the discretion of the righteous, or the moderation of the temperate, than in the context of history?” (HH, 6–9).

³⁴ See, for example, William’s insertion of a long story involving two pleasure-seeking priests, and the evils that befell them, in the midst of recounting William the Conqueror’s exploits in Brittany. He makes only a small apology for the digression, stating that “this story I have included without regret for the profit of my readers” (GR, §238).

³⁵ Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 10.

By the time William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis and Henry of Huntingdon had begun writing, the Norman Conquest lay at least fifty years in the past, but its effects – confusion, resentment and turmoil – continued to resonate. It was a ruthless conquest in its thoroughness: not only were the English subject to foreign rule, but the native lay and clerical aristocracy were eradicated along with many English ecclesiastical practices. Practically speaking, the most obvious impact of the Conquest was the replacement of the majority of England's landowning class with Normans.³⁶ That the tenurial revolution happened so thoroughly in a matter of twenty years must have contributed to a sense of outrage, unease and resentment on the part of the English, which is understandably not well articulated in the Norman sources. The cultural impact is less obvious, but native response to Lanfranc's initial campaign described above indicates that not all of the English clergy accepted Continental rule willingly. Unfortunately, though, the immediate impact of the Conquest is not particularly well documented even by the winners. Apart from the panegyric Norman chronicles and a mass of administrative documentation that reflects dizzying change, there is no well-articulated expression of the anxiety such rapid changes must have caused. By the twelfth century, moreover, when most of the narratives and other historical sources were produced, there could be no homogeneous position. These historians and compilers were, for the most part, by-products of both cultures, English and Norman, and members of different kinds of religious communities.

The decades after the Conquest had been traumatic ones for churchmen in England, and for none more so than for the Benedictine monks whose reputation was, if not in decline, then at least under some scrutiny, and whose lands and privileges were constantly under attack by a rapacious Norman monarchy and aristocracy. The power Benedictine monks had exercised in the episcopate had begun to decline by the mid eleventh century, and this trend only intensified when the Normans arrived.³⁷ The reason was institutional rather than personal: they simply had no experience with the hybrid monastic cathedrals English monks had established at Canterbury, Winchester, Sherborne and Worcester. Although other secular sees would eventually be similarly converted under Norman bishops, and Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, was himself a monk and abbot, William the Conqueror's episcopal appointments, generally speaking, indicate a marked preference for secular, worldly churchmen and not cloistered monks.³⁸ The Benedictines' image suffered even further as a result of the establishment of new monastic orders whose simplicity and relative poverty made the affluence and worldliness of the great Benedictine houses – not to mention the underlying incompatibility of their lifestyle with the *Rule* of St Benedict – more glaring than

³⁶ See R. Fleming, *Kings and Lords in Conquest England* (Cambridge, 1991) and Williams, *English and the Norman Conquest*.

³⁷ M. F. Smith, "The preferment of royal clerks in the reign of Edward the Confessor," *HSJ* 9 (1997), 159–74.

³⁸ M. Brett, "John of Worcester and his contemporaries," in *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. H. C. Davis, et al. (Oxford, 1981), 125–6. See below, 193.

ever.³⁹ John Van Engen quite rightly cautions against making too much of the so-called “crisis of cenobitism,” arguing that while the black monks did face challenges in the Anglo-Norman period, they were also well poised to thrive in the new, expanding European economy of the period 1050–1150.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the lengths to which the Benedictines went to keep the glorious past of the monastic Church alive through the voluminous production of texts of all kinds must reflect some discomfort with their situation as one, and no longer always first, among many.

Added to the psychological pressures were the occasional threats of physical danger and the constant fear of impoverishment that many churchmen faced. Several English monasteries became embroiled in local rebellions, others suffered the outright predation of their lands by a land-hungry king and aristocracy, and still others fell victim to the episcopal usurpation of their enormous privileges.⁴¹ Domesday Book starkly records the physical devastation in the wake of rebellion, most notably in the north. But for the Church as a whole, the volume of administrative sources for the reign of William I indicates the seriousness of the situation: churchmen were constantly at court fighting the king, laymen and other churchmen to recover lands lost in the aftermath of the Conquest. The scramble to authenticate title to lands, evidenced by the mass production of forged charters after the Conquest, shows repeatedly how lands that had been leased out to Anglo-Saxons had been lost in the shuffle. Although the Church was generally successful in its efforts to recover these lands, as well as those purloined by aristocrats, considerable tenacity was required.⁴² The level of anxiety must have been high and it was this anxiety that forced articulate churchmen into defensive positions. The production of universal histories, hagiography, cartularies and chronicles, and even Domesday Book, while defending ancient title to lands and rights, all had the psychological effect of reasserting, in Brett’s words, “the continuity of experience across great caesura of the Conquest.”⁴³ By relegating the Conquest to nothing more than what Southern called a “tremor in a long development,” Anglo-Norman historians were able to rescue the Anglo-Saxon past from the dustbin and use it in defense of the present.

How this was accomplished depended on the needs of individual communities rather than those of the corporate Church. A handful of universal histories by William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis and Henry of Huntingdon have received the most attention from historians, but the majority of the output was overwhelmingly local in its focus, driven by different needs and drawing on diverse

³⁹ Brett, “John of Worcester,” 126.

⁴⁰ J. van Engen, “The ‘crisis of cenobitism’ reconsidered: Benedictine monasticism in the years 1050–1150,” *Speculum* 61 (1986), 269–304.

⁴¹ See Barlow, *English Church II*; Williams, *English and the Norman Conquest*, chapter 6; Golding, *Colonisation and Conquest*, chapter 7 and C. Harper-Bill, “The Anglo-Norman Church,” in *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and E. van Houts (Woodbridge, 2003), 165–90.

⁴² See, for example, Wulfstan II of Worcester’s efforts (JW, s.a. 1070).

⁴³ Brett, “John of Worcester,” 125. See also F. Tinti, “From episcopal conception to monastic compilation: Hemming’s Cartulary in context,” *EME* 11 (2002), 233–62 and P. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994).

traditions. At Worcester, for example, Bishop Wulfstan commissioned the writing of both local history focused on the community's endowment and universal history that was sympathetic to the English past.⁴⁴ Within a few decades, similar endowment histories, some more literary than others, were being written at Abingdon, Ramsey, Peterborough, Waltham, Glastonbury and Wells.⁴⁵ Other communities focused on collateral traditions: Canterbury, Durham and Evesham concentrated their efforts on hagiography,⁴⁶ while the episcopal see of Rochester specialized in Old English legal texts.⁴⁷ At smaller houses all over England, generally anonymous monks were busy doing what William of Malmesbury was doing, only on a smaller scale. Because they had greater access to genuine pre-Conquest material than the universal chroniclers, their histories can be reliable witnesses to the Anglo-Saxon past. But like other historians of the period, these churchmen were not above fabricating what they were missing, particularly when it came to shoring up their communities' ancient traditions and title to lands.⁴⁸ Post-Conquest cartularies and house histories have been studied in some detail, but it bears repeating that their compilers, most of whom were Benedictine monks, shared many of the same convictions as the universal chroniclers, to which we now turn.

Common Convictions

Although they had considerably different viewpoints, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon and Orderic Vitalis shared the same literary conventions and figural interpretation of Christian history. This shared intellectual heritage emerges most clearly in the treatment of past events, where their accounts are often very close. Direct textual borrowings have yet to be established with any certainty, but they were writing at approximately the same time (between 1114 and 1154) and had access to many of the same sources.⁴⁹ Similarities in the treatment of pre-Conquest events suggest that at the very least they were working from similar sources. For the history of contemporary persons and events, though, their accounts differ significantly. What this implies is that the conventions and interpretations governing the writing of Anglo-Saxon history were already well

⁴⁴ Hemming's *Cartulary* and the *Chronicon ex chronicis* of John of Worcester, respectively.

⁴⁵ For the modern editions of these house histories, see Gransden, *Historical Writing*, chapter 13.

⁴⁶ For Durham, see D. Rollason, "St Cuthbert and Wessex: the evidence of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 183," 413–24 and A. J. Piper, "The first generations of Durham monks and the cult of St Cuthbert," 437–46, in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community*, ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge, 1989). For Evesham, see Williams, *English and the Norman Conquest*, 137–8.

⁴⁷ R. W. Southern, "Aspects of the European tradition of historical writing, 4: The sense of the past," *TRHS*, 5th ser. 23 (1973), 251–3.

⁴⁸ See J. Barrow, "The chronology of forgery production at Worcester from c. 1000 to the early twelfth century," in *St Wulfstan and His World*, ed. J. S. Barrow and N. P. Brooks (Aldershot, 2005), 105–22.

⁴⁹ William of Malmesbury, born in England c. 1095, wrote his two major historical works in 1125. Orderic, although born in England in 1075, was sent to Normandy at the age of ten; he composed his history in thirteen books between c. 1114 and 1141 (Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 166 and 152, respectively). Henry was born in England sometime before 1089 and was writing between 1129 and 1154 (Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 193–4).

established by the 1120s, while those governing the writing of contemporary history were still being worked out.

At a structural and figural level, all three writers shared the common purpose of integrating Anglo-Saxon history into the larger span of Christian history, thus providing continuity in the history of the Christian Church. This was accomplished largely through the adoption of a motif Bede had used to explain the fall of the Britons to the Anglo-Saxon invaders: moral lapse provoking retributive invasion. Henry of Huntingdon used this motif at the narrative level, organizing his history around the five plagues that God had inflicted on England at various points in its history: Romans, Picts and Scots, Angles, Danes and Normans. But the narrative structure also served a higher purpose for Henry, who, in Partner's words, "found in certain large segments of time and human history recognizable entities whose unity was neither artificial nor natural but truly divine – God's gesture."⁵⁰ This is reflected in the preface to Book VI, the book of the Norman Conquest, where Henry states that "it is clear that this happened at God's command, so that evil would befall the ungodly. For the Lord Almighty had planned a double affliction for the English people, which He had decided to exterminate for their compelling crimes."⁵¹ Henry was not alone in attributing the pain of the Conquest to the sins of the English; all three historians express this particular interpretation of history in their work, although none so self-consciously as Henry in his marriage of narrative structure to figural interpretation. William of Malmesbury's organization of the *Gesta Regum* was simpler; he ended Book I with the consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and Book II with the Norman Conquest. But that he shared Henry's understanding of God's retribution is unmistakable. The English lost the battle of Hastings not because the Normans were militarily superior but because of King Harold's sin, in which the English nation was complicit. In William's words, "the war itself was a mere trifle; it was God's hidden and stupendous purpose that never again should Englishmen feel together and fight together in defense of their liberties, as though all the strength of England had fallen away with Harold, who could and should have paid the penalty for his perfidy even through the agency of utter cowards."⁵² This view of Anglo-Saxon England's place in the grand scheme of things pervades most twelfth-century historiography.⁵³ Eadmer of Canterbury, whose hagiographical work some of these historians probably used, also recalls Dunstan's prophecy that the kingdom would come to no good and sees the Danish and Norman invasions as the fulfillment of this prophecy.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 22–4.

⁵¹ HH, 339.

⁵² GR, §228.

⁵³ John Gillingham's "Civilizing the English? The English histories of William of Malmesbury and David Hume," *Historical Research* 74 (2001), 14–43) challenges the prevailing orthodoxy of a primarily theological orientation in William the Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum* and also in Henry's work. According to Gillingham, William saw the Norman Conquest and other unfortunate events "not as parts of some profound cyclical process but merely as the ups and downs of nations" (35). Even if a secular meaning is also implicit in the text, as Gillingham persuasively argues, William nevertheless offers an explicitly theological justification for the Conquest.

⁵⁴ HN, 5.

In emphasizing the decadence of Edward the Confessor's Church, historians from Eadmer to Henry found a moral rationale for the Conquest that had much broader significance than Harold's perjury. Norman propaganda written in the aftermath of the Conquest certainly provided the details. In the decades following the Battle of Hastings, Norman writers like William of Poitiers and William of Jumièges justified the Conquest in part by portraying William the Conqueror as the secular enforcer of papal reform in England.⁵⁵ This first generation of historians thus provided a moral justification for what was otherwise a blatant act of foreign aggression. The rationale's effectiveness decades later, though, depended in large part on the sharpness of the contrast; the worse the late Anglo-Saxon Church appeared, the more profound the twelfth-century renaissance. Exaggerated portraits of degeneracy, similar to the following, were thus required:

This lack of discipline affected clergy and laity alike, and inclined both sexes to every kind of lust. Abundance of food and drink gave rise to luxury, the shallowness and flabbiness of the people made them all prone to crime . . . Monks differed very little from seculars in their way of life. They wore no habit and took no vows; they indulged in feasting and private property and countless foul transgressions. But by the governance of King William this order was brought back to a regular way of life and salubrious customs, so that it once again deserved respect.⁵⁶

Racist characterizations such as this from Orderic served to reinforce the fall from grace of a once noble and learned people. William of Malmesbury was similarly explicit in his portraits of degenerate Englishmen, clergy and laymen alike:

For at that time, almost everywhere in England, morals were deplorable, and in the opulence of peace luxury flourished . . . men who blushed to be what they had been born, and let their hair flow like women, would be no more use than women in the defense of their country against the foreigner.⁵⁷

Henry of Huntingdon was not so quick to blame the Anglo-Saxon Church, perhaps because he, unlike either Orderic or William, was a secular clerk and because his was a primarily secular history; nevertheless, the complicity of the Church in "national wickedness" is implicit.⁵⁸

The adoption of this attitude toward the Anglo-Saxon Church at the narrative and thematic levels necessitated, by the twelfth century, the creation of a whole host of stock characters. After all, none of the major English players was still alive, nor were the Anglo-Norman historians old enough to have known them personally. Moreover, apart from hagiography, late Anglo-Saxon sources, as has

⁵⁵ See, in particular, the histories of William of Poitiers (*Histoire de Guillaume le Conquérant*, ed. and trans. R. Foreville, Les Classiques de l'Histoire de France au Moyen Age (Paris, 1952) and William of Jumièges (*The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni*, ed. and trans. E. M. C. Van Houts, vol. ii (Oxford, 1995)).

⁵⁶ OV, 247.

⁵⁷ VSW, i, §16.

⁵⁸ Henry's interest in political events far outweighs his interest in ecclesiastical affairs. He does not, for example, report on the Council of Winchester in 1070. Partner concludes that his interest in the theme of retribution up to his own time, while certainly at the heart of the history, was, more importantly, "a useful device for controlling masses of information without interfering seriously with authorial freedom" (Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 28).

been noted, are remarkably devoid of character development. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which many later historians used, is rarely explicitly judgmental when it comes to prelates, leaving the Anglo-Normans ample room to construct portraits that served their thematic purposes. The best illustration is the twelfth-century portrait of Stigand, the last English archbishop of Canterbury, in whom the worst sins of the Anglo-Saxon Church were made manifest. According to William of Malmesbury, Stigand was:

. . . a prelate with a bad name for ambition and one who sought promotion beyond his due. In hopes of a more lofty see he had deserted the bishopric of the South Saxons and seated himself at Winchester, which he held with the archbishopric. That was why he was never thought by the Apostolic See to be worthy of the pallium, except that he was sent one by a certain Benedict, a usurping pope, who had been bribed no doubt to make the grant, or because bad men make gifts to others like themselves.

And, if his ambition were not enough to condemn him, Stigand was so greedy that after his death

. . . a small key was found in a secret place which, when inserted in the lock of a cupboard in his chamber, produced the evidence for treasures without number, in the form of parchments on which were recorded the quality of precious metals and their quantity by weight, which this miserly hoarder had buried all over his estates . . .⁵⁹

While William's portrait of Stigand is anything but complimentary, it was not even the most derogatory. Eadmer of Canterbury, writing between 1093 and 1125, recorded that Stigand had been guilty of *mala et horrenda crimina*, although he did not elaborate.⁶⁰ Eadmer, it will be recalled, was a passionate defender of the reputation of Christ Church, Canterbury, so it is not surprising that Stigand did not fare well at his hands. After all, Eadmer even thought his brothers at Canterbury guilty of living like earls rather than monks. He was clearly not an objective witness in any sense of the word.⁶¹ It was Orderic Vitalis, however, who was the most disparaging in his depiction of Stigand, noting that the archbishop had "defiled himself with perjury and homicide; and he had not honestly entered into the archbishopric by the right door, but had climbed in from the bishoprics of Norfolk and Winchester, up the shameful ladder of ambition and intrusion."⁶² One of Orderic's sources was probably Eadmer's history of contemporary events at Canterbury, and if so, he does seem to be taking more than a little poetic license here.⁶³

The details of these accounts are largely fictitious. In the first place, William of Malmesbury's version is riddled with errors. Stigand was never bishop of the South Saxons; this was a mistake that probably appeared first in the *Chronicon ex*

⁵⁹ GR, §199.

⁶⁰ HN, 9.

⁶¹ *Miracula S. Dunstani*, §16, in Rubenstein, "History against liturgy," 301. A similar sense of "monastic outrage" pervades Symeon of Durham's history of northern affairs. As William Aird has written, "the *Libellus* is the work of an ecclesiastical polemicist eager to salve the corporate conscience of the Benedictines at Durham" (W. M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans: The Church at Durham, 1071–1153* (Woodbridge, 1998), 105).

⁶² OV, 237–9.

⁶³ Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 157–8.

chronicis of John of Worcester. Although there is no evidence of direct borrowing, William was in a position to have exchanged information with the Worcester monk. As for the refusal of the papacy to grant Stigand a pallium until 1058, which was apparently the case, the reason was not plurality but the fact that the exiled Archbishop Robert was still alive, which made the assumption of the primatial see by anyone uncanonical.⁶⁴ That Stigand was immensely wealthy cannot be denied, but he was in good company with Norman and Anglo-Norman bishops like Odo of Bayeux and Robert Bloet. The wilder accusations of Eadmer and Orderic are not corroborated elsewhere and were doubtless fabricated. At the heart of the stock portrait, then, is the shadowy historical figure of Stigand, but the stylized twelfth-century portrait is of little use to the historian of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

The degree of fabrication in this portrait is underscored by a brief review of the sources available to the chroniclers. For the most part, they drew their information on English bishops from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which, it bears repeating, was remarkably terse. Only the “C” version is at all critical of Stigand, as it is the only one to mention the reason for his suspension from office in 1043 and that his assumption of the archbishopric was uncanonical.⁶⁵ It is, however, unlikely that any of our historians had access to this version; rather, William and Henry were using an archetype of the extant Peterborough version, which was still at St Augustine’s, Canterbury in the early twelfth century. Peterborough’s depiction of Stigand is, at worst, perfunctory, and, at best, complimentary for his role as a royal counselor.⁶⁶ There were, of course, individual notices in monastic cartularies which show him as both a benefactor and a predator, but it is again doubtful that any of the Anglo-Norman historians, particularly Orderic, had access to the materials that went into their production.⁶⁷ If the common source was Eadmer’s *Historia*, as seems likely, the implications for their reliability are clear enough. At the very least, the characterization of Stigand must be seen as an elaboration for thematic purposes, and should therefore make us very suspicious of portraits of English bishops, in particular secular bishops, in these chronicles.

Looking closely at the characterization of this one figure is enlightening because this portrait has had the most impact on the subsequent historiography of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Frank Barlow once wrote of the archbishop that “clearly Stigand was neither a good bishop nor a satisfactory metropolitan,” and that Stigand “represents the bankruptcy of the tenth-century reformation.”⁶⁸ In contrasting Stigand with tenth-century monastic bishops, Barlow explicitly reflects the same thematic contrast in the twelfth-century chronicles. Not

⁶⁴ For the life and career of Stigand, see Smith, “Archbishop Stigand,” 199–219. Some of the greatest early medieval churchmen, English and Norman, had been pluralists, including Archbishop Dunstan and many popes. By 1062, however, the papacy seems to have been more sensitive to the issue.

⁶⁵ ASC, s.a. 1043 and 1053 (C).

⁶⁶ ASC, s.a. 1052 (E).

⁶⁷ See, for example, Stigand’s mixed reviews in the cartulary of Ely Abbey (*LE*, ii, c. 98 and 103; iii, c. and 50).

⁶⁸ Barlow, *English Church I*, 79–80.

surprisingly, each of the Anglo-Norman historians found the late-tenth-century prelates worthy of abundant praise. From William of Malmesbury their lives inspired hyperbole. "In those days," he wrote, "there were holy men who shone like lights all over England, so that one might think the stars in heaven smiled upon it."⁶⁹ For his part, Henry wrote: "now Bishop Æthelwold was a builder of fences, who diverted the paths of iniquity and planted the roots of charity. He was a sower of the best counsel. On his advice, King Edgar founded new plantations and the trees of tenderness most gratifying to God."⁷⁰ Orderic was also inspired by these men, writing of the late tenth-century English Church that "in many houses a noble army of monks was armed with the power of virtue against Satan and taught to fight unremittingly in the Lord's battles until they should win a glorious victory."⁷¹ As the royal sponsor of the reform movement, King Edgar, too, benefited from some post-Conquest massaging of his image, despite the rather lukewarm attitudes of contemporary sources.⁷²

Only in one late-Saxon bishop was the spirit of the tenth-century bishops evident to post-Conquest writers, and that was St Wulfstan of Worcester. William of Malmesbury found in him the most perfect expression of the monk-bishop:

His life kept so fine a balance that he held to both professions without losing either; he was the bishop without abjuring the monk in his religious practice, and the monk while preserving a bishop's authority. . . . Though he was constantly concerned with inner things, men did not find him dilatory or sluggish when it came to outer things.⁷³

It seems unlikely that the real Stigand was as evil or the real Wulfstan as saintly as these characterizations would have us believe; indeed, William described the archbishop as showing "considered judgement" in his support of the latter's elevation to the episcopate.⁷⁴ At one point in his narrative, William even gives Stigand something of a pass, remarking that, in his opinion, "Stigand's sin was just a mistake rather than deliberate. Like most or just about all of the English bishops of those times he was illiterate and did not realize how wrong his actions were, assuming that the business of ecclesiastical affairs could be transacted just like political ones."⁷⁵ Such inconsistencies imply William knew little of the men about whom he was writing.

Given the canonical irregularity of his position as archbishop, Stigand was a relatively easy target. Archbishop Ealdred of York must have presented a much greater challenge. It would have been thematically consistent to construct a similarly derogatory portrait of the last English archbishop of York, but there was no getting around the fact that he had crowned William the Conqueror.⁷⁶ Orderic, who was in the least position to know anything further about Ealdred than that

⁶⁹ *GR*, §149.

⁷⁰ *HH*, 321.

⁷¹ *OV*, 245.

⁷² "It is hard to escape the conclusion that Edgar was a more hollow man than his pretensions suggest" (J. Barrow, "Chester's earliest regatta? Edgar's Dee-rowing revisited," *EME* 10 (2001), 92).

⁷³ *VSW*, i, §14.

⁷⁴ *VSW*, i, §11.

⁷⁵ *GP*, §23. It seems unlikely that a man who had been a bishop for nearly thirty years was illiterate.

⁷⁶ *ASC*, s.a. 1066 (DE); *JW*, s.a. 1066.

which was contained in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, wrote that “he was a man of sober years and a lover of justice: wise, good, eloquent, and full of virtue, following the way of the fathers towards the presence of the King of kings.”⁷⁷ This is by no means a personal portrait. Henry of Huntingdon, too, had little to say other than that Ealdred consecrated the Conqueror. William of Malmesbury, however, had to grapple with what he knew about Ealdred because he had access to Worcester material, which does not always show the archbishop in such a favorable light. In William’s revision of Coleman’s biography of St Wulfstan the ambiguity is quite palpable. In general William found Ealdred “a man wily in secular affairs, but not without piety.”⁷⁸ William is less ambiguous, however, when discussing Ealdred’s misappropriation of Worcester estates after he became archbishop. He was perhaps indulging in a bit of irony when he stated that his “love of Worcester had so captivated him that he prized it higher than the grander name of York,” so much so that he hated to part with even a village belonging to it.⁷⁹ William, the monk who loathed bishops who preyed on monastic endowments, states explicitly in the subsequent chapter that Ealdred “diverted the revenues of the church to his own purposes.”⁸⁰ Once again, the shadowy historical figure of Ealdred can be glimpsed here, but it is impossible to get a clear sense of him.

It is doubtless significant that a story describing Ealdred’s problems with the papacy appears, out of all the twelfth-century chronicles, only in the *Gesta Pontificum*, William of Malmesbury’s book devoted to the bishops.⁸¹ The details are sketchy, but it appears that Ealdred attempted to retain the bishopric of Worcester in plurality with the archbishopric of York, as his predecessors had done. When Ealdred sought the archiepiscopal pallium, however, the pope stuck him on a technical point of canon law that forbade the movement from one bishopric to another. Ealdred, so the story goes, was demoted from both bishoprics and sent packing. His career was saved, however, when robbers attacked his party and the pope was moved out of pity to reinstate him to the archbishopric. In relating this story in the *Gesta Pontificum*, but not in the *Gesta Regum*, William was, it seems to me, trying to be as truthful as possible without compromising the integrity of the king’s consecration. The Ealdred of the *Gesta Regum* is the politically savvy bishop who knew the right horse to back, while the Ealdred of the *Gesta Pontificum* is more representative of the purported degeneracy of the Anglo-Saxon Church. The main difference, however, between the last English archbishops, Stigand and Ealdred, which probably forced William to construct his portrait of Ealdred more carefully, was that Ealdred was a monk and Stigand a secular priest who had worked his way up the ecclesiastical hierarchy through the royal chapel.

⁷⁷ OV, 183.

⁷⁸ VSW, i, §7. The Latin text is *uir multum in secularibus astutus nec parum religiosus*. It is interesting to note that the translators chose “wily” for “astutus.”

⁷⁹ VSW, i, §10.

⁸⁰ VSW, i, §13.

⁸¹ William seems to have gotten the story from the anonymous *VÆR* (see the text’s introduction, xxxiv).

As for the rest of Edward the Confessor's bishops, the Anglo-Normans had remarkably little to say. The main reason was probably that, on the whole, Edward's appointments were good ones. We would like to know, for example, more about bishops Leofric of Exeter, Giso of Wells and Herman of Ramsbury. All three were reforming bishops to one degree or another, but they receive surprisingly little attention in the histories. This was undoubtedly because they were secular bishops and because their very existence contradicted the notion that the Anglo-Saxon Church was riddled with amoral bishops. They are, however, mentioned in the *Gesta Pontificum*, whose structure, theme and purpose was quite different; even here, though, their accomplishments were downplayed. Leofric, for example, who was responsible for making Exeter a center of learning and spirituality in the 1050s, is styled simply *altus et doctus*.⁸² Giso, recognized in the *Historiola Somersetensis* for similar accomplishments at Wells, is only mentioned as having occupied the see, while Herman comes off as a petulant child who, frustrated in his attempts to move the see of Ramsbury to Malmesbury Abbey, left the country in a huff.⁸³ Thus we should also be suspicious of resounding silence in the histories.

The treatment – or more accurately the lack of treatment – of Ulf, bishop of Dorchester and Spearhavoc, bishop-elect of London, who were probably the Confessor's only truly bad appointments, also speaks to this problem. Even the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* departed from its generally non-judgmental stance to say that in 1049 "Ulf, the priest, was appointed as pastor of the bishopric which Eadnoth had had, but later he was expelled because he did nothing worthy of a bishop while he occupied the see, so that it brings shame to us to speak further about it."⁸⁴ This appears in the extant "D" version, a Worcester product, with the archetype of which William of Malmesbury must have had some contact. The extant "E" version, moreover, the archetype which he himself used, reports that when Ulf went to Rome "they were very near to breaking his staff if he had not given exceptionally costly gifts, for he did not know how to perform his offices as well as he ought to have done."⁸⁵ Why, then, did William of Malmesbury pass up the opportunity to pillory this royal priest? The only reason that makes sense, and not too much at that, is that the Norman Ulf shared Robert of Jumièges's exile from England, and in some way William must have found this situation difficult. Henry of Huntingdon clearly did not share William's hesitation to talk frankly about Ulf; he incorporated verbatim the "E" text's version of the bishop's difficulties in Rome.

William also chose not to mention the short-lived pontificate of Spearhavoc, who was appointed to the see of London by King Edward in 1050. According to the versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that William used, Archbishop Robert

⁸² GP, §94. See also E. Drage, "Bishop Leofric and the Exeter Cathedral chapter, 1050–1072: a reassessment of the manuscript evidence," D.Phil. dissertation, Oxford University, 1978, 7 and 287.

⁸³ GP, §90 and 83, respectively.

⁸⁴ ASC, s.a. 1050 (D) [*recte* 1049]. The Abingdon version says "King Edward gave the bishopric to Ulf, his chaplain, and made a bad appointment" (ASC, s.a. 1049 (C)).

⁸⁵ ASC, s.a. 1047 (E) [*recte* 1050].

refused to consecrate Spearhavoc on papal orders, so he occupied the see for several months without consecration. He was expelled from it the following year.⁸⁶ It would be curious that once again William makes no mention of these events but for the fact that Spearhavoc had been abbot of Abingdon before being appointed to the see of London. This time Henry makes no mention of the bishop's troubles.

Variations do occur with some regularity when consideration turns from major players and grand themes to lesser figures and minor events. As the chroniclers reached their own time, though, even greater differences emerge. In the first place, it was obviously more dangerous to write the history of the living than the dead. There was also the problem of the breakdown in narrative structure for events after the Conquest. How could the Anglo-Normans reconcile the theme of moral lapse and divine retribution when the agents of this retribution, Norman and Anglo-Norman bishops, were themselves often quite wealthy, powerful and skilled in warfare? Henry of Huntingdon abandoned altogether the narrative structure of retribution when dealing with post-Conquest events, while William of Malmesbury increasingly incorporated mythical elements in an effort to avoid having to make the same kinds of judgments he had made for the earlier period.⁸⁷ It is in the treatment of contemporary events and figures that we see the particular viewpoints of the historians emerge most clearly, viewpoints that also affected their attitudes towards the Anglo-Saxon Church.

The History of Lost Causes

Although William, Henry and Orderic shared a similar understanding of the place of Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical history in the larger scope of Christian history, they diverged considerably in their treatment of people and events of their own day. Without stock characterizations to guide them, they were more or less forced to interpret people and events individually, and it was here that their personal experiences were most clearly encoded. That significant differences would result is not surprising given their very different lives: William, an Anglo-Norman Benedictine monk, highly intellectual but fiercely pro-monastic; Orderic, English by birth but Norman in attitude, in awe of the noble Norman knights and churchmen whose actions often offended his basically orthodox Benedictine sensibilities; and Henry, the archdeacon of Huntingdon, whose knowledge of and participation in the secular world gave him a very different perspective from that of the monks. Even so, all three had reason to lament a lost cause, which, Gabrielle Spiegel provocatively argues, was a guiding force in the production of historical writing in the Middle Ages.⁸⁸ What was lost differed for each of the

⁸⁶ ASC, s.a. 1048 (E) [*recte* 1050], 1050 (C), 1051 (D) [*recte* 1050]; JW, s.a. 1050.

⁸⁷ Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, 23.

⁸⁸ "The search for a usable past, capable of redeeming a cause that has been lost, in ideological if not actual political terms, becomes a compelling task for those who feel the need to mask the failure of their enterprise, to dissimulate the malaise that accompanies a fall from social grace, a decline in political

historians, as will become apparent, but this overarching purpose pervades their writing. The remainder of this chapter therefore examines in some detail what was lost, how that loss was expressed, and its implications for the writing of Anglo-Saxon history, then and now.

Of the three historians under consideration, the Benedictine monk William of Malmesbury was, in many respects, the most self-consciously ideological. As the conservator of a way of life under pressure from religious groups with different values, William considers the question of good and evil almost exclusively from a monastic viewpoint. Good kings, laymen and prelates protected the financial and spiritual integrity of monastic communities, while bad kings, laymen and prelates trampled on monks. This was certainly true for his treatment of pre-Conquest churchmen, but he saved his greatest outrage for living prelates. Although he admired the monk-archbishop Lanfranc for his scholarship as well as several other of William the Conqueror's early appointees,⁸⁹ an overwhelming sense of the ultimate failure of the post-Conquest reform effort pervades the *Gesta Pontificum* in relation to his contemporaries. The sin of these bishops was their worldliness – their primarily secular origins, their unprecedented participation in political affairs, and their great wealth – epitomized in his contemptuous portrait of Odo bishop of Bayeux and the Conqueror's choice for earl of Kent:

In the accumulation of wealth he was a great double-dealer and showed great cunning, and had almost succeeded in buying the see of Rome from the citizens in his own absence, by stuffing the wallets of pilgrims with letters and coin. When rival throngs of knights from the whole kingdom hastened to join him on hearing of the journey he was planning, the king was furious and put him in chains, having explained that his fetters were not for the bishop of Bayeux but for the earl of Kent.⁹⁰

William was openly critical of secular bishops who moved their sees into monasteries and ran roughshod over the monks. Although he eventually softened in his attitude toward one such bishop, John, bishop of Bath and Wells, when he proved himself learned and generous over time,⁹¹ William never forgave Robert de Limesey for moving his see from Chester into the venerable and wealthy abbey of Coventry:

There was in Chester diocese a convent by the name of Coventry, founded, as I have already said, by the most noble Earl Leofric and his wife Godgifu, with such a display of gold and silver that the very walls of the church seemed too narrow to contain all its treasures, and it was a great wonder to all beholders. This excited the cupidity of Robert, bishop of the diocese, and in a most unepiscopal [thievish] fashion he pounced upon it,

authority, and a sense of the irrelevance of values that had guided comportment and identified the once-prestigious possessors of power and authority as central players in the social game" (Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 1).

⁸⁹ GR, §267.

⁹⁰ GR, §277.

⁹¹ "And although at first he had shown great austerity at almost all points he had shown himself insensitive and unreliable, he began and carried through a notable programme at Bath in the field of decoration and books, and particularly in building up a monastic community notable for their learning and devotion. All the same, he could never, even on his deathbed, be softened as with true generosity to give them free access to the income from their lands, thus leaving his successors a precedent that should not be followed" (GR, §340).

seizing enough of the actual treasures of the church to satisfy the hand which had given it to him . . . and in that see he spent several years without showing any symptom of virtue. The roofs threatened to fall in, and he took no steps to rescue them; he despoiled his church of its wealth until he won a name for malversation . . . He allowed his monks a wretched pittance for their food, and neither tried to kindle within them love of the religious life nor suffered them to aim at anything above an elementary education, for fear that adequate victuals might soften them, or the rigour of the Rule and the vigour of increasing knowledge might encourage them to withstand him. Content therefore with country fare and a smattering of letters, they thought themselves lucky if they could only live unmolested.⁹²

Although the Gregorian position on simony is not explicitly articulated, William found in Ranulf Flambard the personification of the utter failure of the Conqueror's "reform" of the English Church:

The king's rapacious intentions were warmly seconded by Ranulf, a cleric whose ready tongue and wit had raised him from the lowest ranks of society to the top . . . It was his policy, when shepherds of the Church died, to put their sacred offices up for sale; for at the news of the death of any bishop or abbot, a royal clerk was at once sent down to make a written inventory of all he found and bring all subsequent income into the royal treasury. Meanwhile search was made for the most suitable successor to the deceased, the criterion being coin instead of character, and the honour when finally disposed of was, so to say, milked dry, yet bought at a great price . . . The knightly code of honour disappeared; courtiers devoured the substance of the country people and engulfed their livelihood, taking the very food out of their mouths. Long flowing hair, luxurious garments, shoes with curved and pointed tips became the fashion. Softness of body rivalling the weaker sex, a mincing gait, effeminate gestures and a liberal display of the person as they went along, such was the ideal fashion of the younger men. Spineless, unmanned, they were reluctant to remain as Nature had intended they should be; they were a menace to the virtue of others and promiscuous with their own.⁹³

This is William at his rhetorical and imaginative best, but it serves a greater purpose than just the opportunity to display his disappointment. Recalling what happened the last time the English let their hair down, so to speak, one expects God's retribution in the form of yet another invasion to follow. It does not happen, of course, but the warning seems clear enough.

Most scholars would agree that, on the whole, William's extreme pessimism was unwarranted. And even he had trouble fabricating sins to attach to many prelates, even secular ones. He wrote of several bishops of Worcester, for instance, that one was adequately educated and not abusive to the monks, but too gluttonous; his successor was as corpulent, but not as hospitable.⁹⁴ Occasionally he did chide contemporary monk-bishops, such as Ralf, bishop of Rochester, who, although pious, apparently found a bit too much humor in things.⁹⁵ These comments reflect the nuances of William's thinking, and they show him to be quite narrow minded at times. But they also suggest he was not always one sided: not all monk-bishops were commendable, nor were all secular bishops bad. The

⁹² *GR*, §341.

⁹³ *GR*, §314.

⁹⁴ *GP*, §150 and 151 and note 4, respectively.

⁹⁵ "He was never marked by even the smallest suspicion of wrongdoing, except that he was more inclined to a laugh and a joke than seemed to be suitable for his dignified position" (*GP*, §71).

yardstick seems to have been the degree of their piety and the protection they offered monastic communities. Unfortunately, William's treatment of pre-Conquest churchmen is less nuanced, probably because he did not know them personally nor did he apparently have access to reliable information about them. He is perhaps not quite as polemical as Symeon of Durham, whose house history is suffused with such monastic bias as to render it wholly unreliable in its treatment of the secular Church.⁹⁶ But William, like every other writer, was a victim of his own experiences and biases, and we should expect nothing less.

Not surprisingly, Orderic Vitalis shared William's hatred of the kind of ambition and greed that led dukes, laymen and even churchmen to despoil the Church. But he did not experience the turmoil and confusion of the post-Conquest settlement of England, and his history reflects a very different set of preoccupations. Although a member of a Benedictine monastic community like William, Orderic was not as sensitive to clerical worldliness as William. Having grown up in a busy Norman monastery, Orderic approaches lay involvement in the affairs of the Church from a pragmatic perspective, clearly admiring the noble knights who were St Evroul's benefactors.⁹⁷ Generally speaking, Orderic had no problem with the "worldliness" of the Church, which he considered a necessary evil. He was not, of course, indifferent to extreme cases of corruption, as his characterization of Odo bishop of Bayeux demonstrates: "what shall I say of Odo, bishop of Bayeux, who was an earl palatine dreaded by Englishmen everywhere, and able to dispense justice like a second king? . . . In this man, it seems to me, vices were mingled with virtues, but he was more given to worldly affairs than to spiritual contemplation."⁹⁸ Orderic admired those Norman bishops and abbots who were both pious leaders and capable administrators, a delicate balancing act if ever there was one. Thus he wrote of Abbot Thierry that some of the monks felt him *too* spiritually minded: "They would say amongst themselves, 'a man like this has no right to be abbot, for he cannot live without the men who plough. This man is a fool who spends his time reading and writing in the cloister instead of procuring the means of livelihood for the brethren.'"⁹⁹ Although he thought that the monks were mean spirited toward the saintly Thierry, Orderic could understand their position. Throughout his work, good ecclesiastical leaders were like Robert, bishop of Seez, "zealous in the service of God and a very good friend to the monks."¹⁰⁰

Of all the portraits of the pre-Conquest English Church, Orderic's is the most static (that is, highly conventional) because his lost cause had very little to do with the English at all. He wrote the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church because it was part of the larger story that he was telling: that of the Norman people and Church. His lost cause was not English, but Norman. It was not even specifically

⁹⁶ See above, note 61.

⁹⁷ Barlow captures Orderic's attitude succinctly, if a bit cynically: "Orderic's religion was unashamedly commercial and he believed that St Evroul gave good value for money . . . salvation had its price and monks were there to collect the entrance fee" (Barlow, *English Church* II, 25).

⁹⁸ OV, 265.

⁹⁹ OV, 53.

¹⁰⁰ OV, 255.

ecclesiastical, but applicable to dukes, knights, bishops and monks alike: the degeneracy of the noble ideals of the aristocratic classes. Orderic condemned not only the Church's predators, but all who failed to live up to the high ideals of the chivalric code. Thus he found the Norman Conquest particularly distasteful because of the victors' blatant display of greed. He writes, "the same just judge avenged the English on the eve of Sunday, and plunged the fierce Normans into the abyss of destruction. For they had been guilty of coveting the goods of other men, contrary to the precept of the law."¹⁰¹ About William the Conqueror, he had very mixed feelings; on the one hand he admired him, but he also thought him unnecessarily cruel, especially toward the northern English: "nowhere else had William shown such cruelty. Shamefully he succumbed to this vice, for he made no effort to restrain his fury and punished the innocent with the guilty. . . . My narrative has frequently had occasion to praise William, but for this act which condemned the innocent and guilty alike to die by slow starvation I cannot commend him."¹⁰² And, despite William's generosity to the Church, which Orderic frequently commended, the shame that the greed of the king's followers brought upon the once-proud Norman race pained him greatly:

O fools and sinners! Why did they not ponder contritely in their hearts that they had conquered not by their own strength but by the will of almighty God, and had subdued a people that was greater, and more wealthy than they were, with a longer history: a people moreover amongst whom many saints and wise men and mighty kings had led illustrious lives, and won distinction in many ways at home and on the battlefield?¹⁰³

Orderic's ambivalence is perhaps best captured in a letter that he includes, purportedly written by one Guitmund, to William the Conqueror, who had apparently offered him a position in the English Church. Guitmund declines, saying: "considering these and other precepts of the divine law I am sorely afraid; I deem all England the spoils of robbery and shrink from it and its treasures as from consuming fire . . . I abandon the rich plunder of England as so much trash to the men of the world. I prefer the free poverty of Christ."¹⁰⁴ While we cannot be certain, the letter was probably a rhetorical device, a way for Orderic to make his feelings about the Conquest known.¹⁰⁵ A sense of fair play pervades his work in many respects, but it has sadly little effect on his treatment of the English Church, which he seems to have adopted uncritically from sources that were often quite hostile.

In many respects, Henry of Huntingdon was a composite of William and Orderic. Like William, Henry found himself in the unenviable position of defending a declining way of life under attack from without; like Orderic he often had cause to lament its degeneracy from within. Henry's world was that of the secular Church. He was an archdeacon who was the son of an archdeacon, and he

¹⁰¹ OV, 179.

¹⁰² OV, 231. For William's commendable traits, see 239–41.

¹⁰³ OV, 269.

¹⁰⁴ OV, 271.

¹⁰⁵ See Albu, *Normans in their Histories*, 180–213.

had spent his life in the service of the local bishop.¹⁰⁶ Like his father before him, Henry had a wife and family of his own, at a time when such a lifestyle was coming under increasing attack from the Roman curia. Of the three, Henry's world was perhaps in the most obvious decline, and his historical writings reflect this situation. In opposition to William, who applauded the efforts of the reform movement to root out incontinence, Henry took it personally, although he deflected criticism onto unnamed "others":

In the same year [1102] Archbishop Anselm held a council in London at Michaelmas, in which he forbade English priests to have wives which had not been prohibited before. This seemed to some to be the greatest purity, but to others there seemed a danger that if they sought a purity beyond their capacity, they might fall into horrible uncleanness, to the utter disgrace of the Christian name.¹⁰⁷

Henry and William would have had very little to say to one another despite the fact that they lived at the same time; the world of the married archdeacon and courtier seems light-years away from that of the cloistered, albeit well-traveled, monk.

If these two contemporary historians disagreed on the issue of clerical celibacy, they were also at odds in their attitudes toward clerical worldliness. As a product of the secular hierarchy, Henry seems to have reveled in the opulent lifestyle of his superiors. His description of Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln, one of the twelfth century's great prince-bishops, is illustrative. William of Malmesbury despised Robert for purported crimes against the monks of Stow and Canterbury.¹⁰⁸ Henry could not have disagreed more: "I saw the glory of Robert, our bishop – I mean his handsome knights, noble young men, his horses of great price, his golden and gilded vessels, the number of courses, the splendour of those who waited upon him, the purple garments and satins – I thought without doubt nothing could be more blessed."¹⁰⁹ Henry obviously did not share William's near blanket contempt of worldly prelates, although he was aware that there was a fine line between glory and avarice. He did occasionally denounce bishops with whose politics he did not agree, but for the most part, he was balanced in his attitude toward his fellow churchmen.¹¹⁰ His overarching concern was not Benedictine monasticism, nor even the nobility of aristocrats lay and ecclesiastical, but the transitoriness of human life, which he expressed through the *contemptus mundi* theme. Thus he wrote about the dead King Henry:

See, then, whoever you are reading this, how the corpse of a most mighty king, whose crowned head had sparkled with gold and the finest jewels, like the splendour of God,

¹⁰⁶ For Henry's background and his archdeaconry, see HH, xxiii–lii.

¹⁰⁷ HH, 450–1.

¹⁰⁸ See Barlow, *English Church* II, 71.

¹⁰⁹ HH, 587.

¹¹⁰ "Even when he [Bishop Gilbert of London] died he gave nothing away, but King Henry found an infinite quantity of treasure among his hidden possessions. Even the bishop's buskins, stuffed with gold and silver, were brought into the royal treasury" (HH, 601). Henry seems to have found William of Corbeil, archbishop of Canterbury, unworthy only on the grounds that he had crowned Stephen (Barlow, *English Church* II, 86).

(Re)Writing History

whose hands had shone with sceptres, while the rest of his body had been dressed in gorgeous cloth of gold, and his mouth had always fed on the most delicious and choice foods, for whom everyone would rise to their feet, whom everyone feared, with whom everyone rejoiced, and whom everyone admired: see what that body became, how fearfully it melted away, how wretchedly cast down it was! See, I say, the outcome of events, upon which final judgement always depends. And learn to hold in contempt whatever is put to such an end, whatever is reduced to nothing in this way.¹¹¹

Painfully aware of life's fragility, Henry demonstrates great concern for the salvation of his literary subjects and for his readers. Although his history is suffused with what Partner calls a "cultivated gloom," it was not even his most philosophical work on the subject. In the poem *De contemptu visibilium*, for example, Henry contemplated the futility of life in death:

Death hurries on – you are sluggish
Death knocks at the door – you are sluggish
It enters – you are sluggish
Man, be mindful of yourself.
Why do you lose yourself while preserving your possessions?
Surely you will lose them along with yourself.
But if you do not possess yourself, what *do* you possess?
You care less, more for them
To give you a gentle warning at least
Care more for yourself, less for them.¹¹²

Henry's acknowledgement of the futility of earthly prosperity was more than just a literary *topos*; it was a eulogy to the good old days combined with a certain amount of self-loathing. Henry's "secular" history is thus in many ways the most profound of the three.

Refashioning the Past

The implications of these conventions and ideological assertions are significant. Verbatim or embellished characterizations of Anglo-Saxon prelates should obviously alert us to the fact that they are probably *topoi*. Because they did not know these churchmen personally, because their sources were typically devoid of interpretation, and because these historians were not writing Anglo-Saxon history for its own sake, William, Henry and Orderic employed stock characterizations that suited both their narrative and thematic needs. Because these histories were controlled by current conventions of narrative structure and theme, nothing that is said about the pre-Conquest English Church should be accepted uncritically. This is not to say that they are worthless, only that the conventions need to be borne in mind at all times.

The more difficult task is to decode the ideological purpose for which a particular history was written in the first place, and its implications for various components within the history. It seems clear that each of the three historians under

¹¹¹ HH, 702–5.

¹¹² HH, 796–9.

consideration had very different reasons for writing history, although they all seem to have been motivated by a common concern to rejuvenate a lost cause of some sort. They each had a very different viewpoint even though they lived and wrote at essentially the same time and in the same corner of the world. The combination of ideological purpose and viewpoint had an immeasurable effect on their histories as a whole, and this brief analysis has hopefully illustrated how these historians' understanding of their contemporary world influenced their views of the past. As we have seen, one should be especially cautious of William of Malmesbury's negative portraits of secular bishops and likewise question his lack of interest in those who were reformers. His attitude toward bishops of his own period demonstrates that his condemnation of the pre-Conquest Church had as much to do with a deep distrust of secular ecclesiastics as it did any factual evidence he may have had of its decadence.

Orderic, on the other hand, seems to have employed and embellished upon these stock characterizations not out of any hatred of secular prelates, but because these portraits illustrated what happened to once-noble people who succumbed to ambition and other vices. Bad bishops, who dishonored the Church in their outright greed and predation, could be found in both the English and Norman, pre- and post-Conquest Churches, according to Orderic, who was even less critical of his sources than William. He was, after all, writing Anglo-Saxon history from the great distance, both geographical and temporal, of a Norman monastery, and his purpose was to extol the glorious deeds of noble Norman laymen and clergy. Despite a pervasive sense of fair play, which can easily be mistaken by modern historians as objectivity, Orderic's account of the pre-Conquest English Church is, I believe, the most literary in its purpose and treatment, and therefore of the least value historically.

Of them all, Henry's history is the most compelling. As a historian, he was the most interested in secular life, and therefore the least burdened by the weight of conventional monastic *mores*. Unfortunately, however, Henry chose to adopt contemporary literary conventions and interpretations for the pre-Conquest part of his history, leaving us wishing that he had had more interest in ecclesiastical affairs in general, and pre-Conquest affairs in particular. Although less ideologically encoded, Henry's history is also the most perfunctory and so also of little value to historians of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

As literary products these histories and the many other texts composed in the twelfth century contain a wealth of information regarding the attitudes and values of those who created them, and they point to important differences in mental worlds. But it is important to remember that it is not the mental world of pre-Conquest England that these attitudes and values reflect. It is therefore disheartening to see many of the views examined here perpetuated in modern historiography. Emma Mason's recent biography of St Wulfstan of Worcester, for instance, is haunted by William of Malmesbury, upon whose reworking of the saint's *vita* it is largely based. Seemingly without much regard for William's prejudices, she writes that "Wulfstan was concerned about the permissive, even debauched lifestyle which seemed to him prevalent throughout most of England. He particularly deplored the fashion for men to wear long hair. . . . He argued that

men who were ashamed to be what they were born . . . would prove no more able than women to defend their homeland against aggressors from overseas.”¹¹³ Mason cites as corroborating evidence only the depiction of Normans and Anglo-Saxons on the Bayeux Tapestry, but it seems clear to me that these are William of Malmesbury’s views; whether they were Wulfstan’s, too, is impossible to determine.

Aspects of Frank Barlow’s 1979 survey of the English Church, which, until now has been the standard treatment of the subject, are no less flawed, albeit for different reasons. William of Malmesbury casts a long shadow over this work as well, not, one suspects, out of a lack of evidence but because Barlow seems to share William’s disdain for pre-Conquest English ecclesiastical culture:

At its worst the ecclesiastical culture of the eleventh century was a swamp formed by brackish trickles from ancient civilizations . . . only fragments of learning were to hand, and usually in such debased forms that only the most outstanding scholars could make anything of them. . . . And it was only the superhuman efforts of a few men which kept the air fresh above the nastiness of the sub-antique, the stagnant end of an old world.¹¹⁴

Barlow’s low opinion of the Old English Church is more than vaguely reminiscent of William of Malmesbury’s assertion in the *Gesta Pontificum* that “in process of time, the desire after literature and religion had decayed for several years before the arrival of the Normans. The clergy, contented with a very slight degree of learning, could scarcely stammer out the words of the sacraments; and a person who understood grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment.”¹¹⁵ Henry Loyn’s survey is far more balanced in its approach to twelfth-century sources, but his comment that “there was great potential locked up in the institutions of the Old English Church” is hardly a ringing endorsement.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the problem has been compound, however unintentionally, by the imbalance of interest in the monastic Church over the years, which has tended to relegate its secular component to second-rate status. John Blair puts it best when he writes that “ecclesiastical historians’ distaste for the lifestyle of secular minsters, which has become less explicit but can even now seem virtually instinctive, reflects contemporary partisanship absorbed into a historiographical tradition which has privileged the centre over the localities, and the ideals of the reformers over the realities and needs of grass-roots religious life.”¹¹⁷

When all is said and done, historians have no choice but to work with the evidence they are given, and ecclesiastical historians are certainly no exception. This chapter has hopefully demonstrated the difficulties of using late sources. It would be foolish to argue, however, that Anglo-Saxon sources are somehow unproblematic; as the introduction demonstrated, they are clearly not. Despite their problems, however, they do get us closer to the mental world of the eleventh century than the later sources do, and therefore must be given greater weight,

¹¹³ Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, 98.

¹¹⁴ Barlow, *English Church I*, 288.

¹¹⁵ *GR*, §245.

¹¹⁶ Loyn, *English Church, 940–1154*, 66.

¹¹⁷ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 346.

even when they fail to please on aesthetic grounds. The remainder of this book will make extensive use of the various versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the *Chronicle of John of Worcester*, which, although it was written after Conquest, shows little of the biases of some of its sources, including the works of William of Malmesbury, Eadmer and Symeon.¹¹⁸ The following chapters also rely heavily on the non-narrative evidence contained in liturgies, wills, charters and the like. While they often lack the style and felicity of language of the chronicles discussed above, they also often lack their agendas. A sensible use of all of the evidence available to us, including, on occasion, troublesome genres like hagiography and twelfth-century historical writing, will hopefully provide a richer and more accurate picture than the one that has endured for the past seven hundred years.

¹¹⁸ JW, xx; Brett, "John of Worcester," 101–26.

The *Servitium Regis*

FOR THE most part, post-Conquest narratives convey the impression that there were only two types of bishops in late Anglo-Saxon England: pious monastic bishops and worldly secular ones. This dichotomy emerges clearly in the stock portraits analyzed in chapter 1, particularly in the writings of the monk-historians. While most medievalists recognize these characterizations as *topoi*, they have nevertheless crept into the modern historiography of the Church because of a curious lack of interest in non-monastic bishops, either individually or as a group, or in the so-called secular activities of the episcopate. Only a few modern historians of early medieval England have evinced any real interest in exploring the dimensions of episcopal power in the secular as well as the spiritual realm.¹ Yet Anglo-Saxon bishops, like all early medieval bishops, regularly exercised power in a variety of secular arenas, and contemporary sources reflect little, if any, discomfort with either the theory or the practice. Only the participation of bishops and other clerics in warfare seems to have engendered any comment. Ælfric of Eynsham, for one, wrote that the fight of bishops was a spiritual one, and that they would do more harm than good by abandoning the fight against spiritual enemies in favor of earthly ones.² Ecclesiastical canons are also reasonably clear in their condemnation of warrior clerics, bishops included.³ Likewise, an eleventh-century tract known as the *Northumbrian Priests' Law* fines priests for bringing weapons into church.⁴ And later, two versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* would say of Leofgar, bishop of Hereford, that:

He wore his moustaches during his priesthood until he became a bishop. After his consecration, he forsook his chrism and his cross, his spiritual weapons, and seized his spear and sword, and thus armed joined the levies against Gruffudd, the Welsh king: and there was slain and his priests who were with him.⁵

It is unclear, however, if proscriptions against participation in warfare were mere rhetorical conventions or widely held convictions. The assignment of an

¹ See introduction, note 2.

² Ælfric's homily for the Sunday after Ascension, in T. Powell, "The 'Three Orders' of society in Anglo-Saxon England," *ASE* 23 (1994), 128–9.

³ "A cleric ought also not to wield arms or to go out to war, because the canons teach that whatever cleric has died in warfare or in a brawl, there should not be any plea made for him, either at the offering or in prayer; he should not be denied a grave, however. The Apostle also says: No-one on active service for God is to involve himself with worldly business. It follows that he who has wished to involve himself in worldly military service is not free from the snares of the devil" (*WCLC*, Rec. B, nos. 159 and 165).

⁴ *C&S*, no. 63, §37.

⁵ *ASC*, s.a. 1056 (CD).

unworldly prelate to the Welsh marches in the reign of Edward the Confessor was perhaps tantamount to a death sentence, and it is more reasonable to suppose that Leofgar was chosen for this dangerous assignment precisely because he was a competent military leader. Many contemporary Continental bishops were active warriors, either as heads of their own armies against other territorial lords or as impromptu defenders of the faith against heathen Magyars and Slavs.⁶ Some, such as Archbishop Robert of Rouen and Yves, bishop of Seez, held secular as well as ecclesiastical titles in contemporary Normandy, a common Continental practice.⁷ As David Douglas once remarked, “the new Norman warrior nobility had, in short, between 1035 and 1066, obtained substantial control over the Norman episcopate, and the Norman bishops during these years were in consequence deeply committed to the maintenance of that nobility in power.”⁸ No bishop in England wielded two swords, so to speak, until the Norman Conquest, when, as was mentioned above, Odo, the Conqueror’s half-brother and bishop of Bayeux, was rewarded with the earldom of Kent for his part in the successful military venture.⁹

In any case, it is difficult to determine contemporary attitudes to bellicose prelates, even on the Continent, before the later eleventh century. Martial bishops did draw occasional condemnation from Continental writers, in particular monks, but Jane Nightingale has argued that such opposition generally arose from personal antipathies between bishops and local monastic communities rather than deeply held theological beliefs.¹⁰ Open warfare is indeed the only situation in which English sources betray any fundamental discomfort with the secular demands made of bishops.¹¹ Rather, the weight of evidence favors interpreting episcopal participation in the political arena as a pastoral duty rather than a secular burden. We begin where all discussions of the later Anglo-Saxon Church’s worldview must, with the writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York, the eleventh century’s most articulate and prolific prelate. Attributing one individual’s vision to an entire institution is admittedly problematic, but given the dearth of evidence, to do less would require abandoning the discussion altogether. The likelihood that Wulfstan’s political ideas resonated in the secular world was underscored by Patrick Wormald, who argues in his magisterial study of Anglo-Saxon law that “the best one can hope is that Wulfstan was a trusted

⁶ A stunning example is the battle of Cher, which took place in 1038 and in which Archbishop Aimo of Bourges apparently led 700 clerics to their deaths (G. Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Centuries*, trans. T. Reuter (Cambridge, 1993), 127).

⁷ Yves still styled himself *Belismi castri princeps* well into his pontificate (D. Douglas, “The Norman episcopate before the Norman Conquest,” *Cambridge Historical Journal* 13 (1957), 104–6 and note 44).

⁸ Douglas, “The Norman episcopate,” 104. See also D. Spear, “Power, patronage and personality in the Norman cathedral chapters,” *ANS* 20 (1998), 205–21.

⁹ Odo perhaps also governed England in the Conqueror’s absence, at least before he fell out of favor in 1082. See D. Bates, “The character and career of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux (1049/50–1097),” *Speculum* 50 (1975), 1–20.

¹⁰ J. Nightingale, “Bishop Gerard of Toul (936–94) and attitudes to episcopal office,” in *Warriors and Churchmen*, ed. Reuter, 42.

¹¹ Ælfric did disapprove, however, of bishops acting as secular judges (C&S, p. 418 and no. 45.15 [Letter from Ælfric to Wulfstan, Archbishop of York]).

enough servant of government (and no one except an emphatically Establishment figure would be given the northern archbishopric) for his own intellectual odyssey to shed some light on elite mentalities in general.”¹² That he could have had less resonance in ecclesiastical circles hardly seems likely.

Despite Wulfstan’s singular importance as a statesman, legislator, homilist and canonist, which has long been recognized, he has only recently received the kind of interdisciplinary attention from scholars that has proved so useful in other cases. An impressive collection of essays, drawing on the most recent work in history, literature, philology, codicology and art history, goes a long way toward correcting what Patrick Wormald has called Wulfstan’s “rather odd” historiography, due in part to the difficulties of pinning down his actual corpus and to the very little that is known of him personally.¹³ It is generally assumed that Wulfstan was born to a well-to-do family in the eastern Danelaw, although almost nothing is known of his life or career before he appears in the record as occupying the bishoprics of London from 996 to 1002, Worcester from 1002 to 1016, and the archbishopric of York from 1002 to 1023.¹⁴ John of Worcester and the house chronicler of Ely abbey, where the archbishop was buried, assumed he was a monk, but historians have recently challenged this assertion.¹⁵ In any case, Wulfstan’s various pontificates coincided with a period of intense political instability as well as renewed Viking activity, both of which exerted palpable influence on his intellectual output. Besides authoring ecclesiastical treatises and homilies and compiling an impressive collection of canon law, Wulfstan was responsible for Æthelred II’s later legal codes and those of Cnut, discussed in some detail below. As Wormald has remarked, no one came closer to codifying the law of the Anglo-Saxon Church after Theodore than Archbishop Wulfstan of York.¹⁶ Unlike Abbot Ælfric, with whom he corresponded, Wulfstan was front and center in the many political dramas of his day. Both churchmen demonstrate a great deal of pragmatism in their writings (Ælfric’s *Pastoral Letters* particularly so), but unlike the abbot of Eynsham, Wulfstan was a busy pastor as well as canonist and statesman. His hands-on approach is highlighted, literally as well as figuratively, by the survival of nearly a dozen manuscripts bearing his own script and containing texts that influenced the shape of the English Church and polity for decades to come.¹⁷ The texts have appeared, in their present form, to lack coherence to modern eyes, but the failure, Wormald has convincingly argued for years, is ours and not the archbishop’s. The desire of modern scholars to fit his

¹² P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century, I: Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford, 2001), 450–1.

¹³ *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York. The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference*, ed. M. Townend (Turnhout, 2004). The historiography is explored in Wormald’s article, “Archbishop Wulfstan: eleventh-century state-builder,” 9–16.

¹⁴ See Wormald, “Archbishop Wulfstan: eleventh-century state-builder,” 12–13.

¹⁵ *LE*, ii, §87; JW, s.a. 1002. Wormald, “Archbishop Wulfstan: eleventh-century state-builder,” 13, but J. Hill, “Archbishop Wulfstan: reformer?” 311, both in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*.

¹⁶ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 218–19.

¹⁷ G 294, 314, 341, 366, 383, 412, 626, 629, 774 and 814 (N. Ker, “The handwriting of Archbishop Wulfstan,” in *England Before the Conquest*, 315–31). See also Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 198–224.

writings into various recognizable genres, such as law and homily, and to edit and study them almost exclusively within these separate contexts, has obscured the rational and synthetic goals of the program Wulfstan devised over the course of many years. In Wormald's words,

The point that needs making both to literary and legal historians is that Wulfstan's conjunction of homily and law was not a bastard progeny of a union of moral and jural genres better kept well apart. It was a wholly logical response to the position of Carolingian and sub-Carolingian bishops as God's good servants and the king's too. The surprise is only that Wulfstan was the one European bishop of his time to adopt this approach.¹⁸

In other words, Wulfstan employed every means at his disposal – legal, homiletic, canonical and liturgical – to drive home the theme that unites virtually all of his writings: the traumas of the eleventh century were the result of the Anglo-Saxons' "lack of true faith" and only through a concerted effort on all fronts – lay as well as ecclesiastical – could the English people be restored to God's favor. To quote Wormald once again, "from 1014 at least, his *oeuvre* aimed to reorder society such that it would never again merit the punishment meted out by God in that grim year. So far from containing merely notes for his sermons, Wulfstan's books were blueprints for a People of God."¹⁹ If enacted, Wulfstan's proposed remedy for the kingdom's spiritual illness, a recommitment of all of the faithful to live good Christian lives, would certainly result in the unprecedented promotion of episcopal power.

Written late in his life, the treatise known as the *Institutes of Polity* remains the standard text of Wulfstanian political theology. Composed against the backdrop of the military failure and political treachery of Æthelred's reign, it sets out his view of the well-ordered Christian polity, a polity that would (unlike Æthelred's kingdom, presumably) be pleasing to God. *Polity* examines the duties of kings, bishops, earls and reeves, and various holy men and women, and provides a general commentary on the state of the kingdom and Church. It begins by describing the quasi-priestly role of the king who is a shepherd over his flock and whose duty it is to protect the Church and promote righteousness through justice. Although he takes pride of place in *Polity* (after the heavenly king, of course), and was answerable for the spiritual as well as physical well-being of his subjects, the king was not the ultimate source of remedy for the kingdom's problems. For as much as powerful laymen, beginning with the most powerful layman of all, had an important role to play in the purification of English society, remedy ultimately lay with the bishops, who possessed the keys of heaven and held the power to bind and loose on earth.²⁰ A series of images from the late tenth and eleventh centuries underscores the authority of the episcopate derived from the apostles. Several appear in the *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, which was probably produced for the bishop's use at Winchester. In the image depicting the Doubting of Thomas, the

¹⁸ Wormald, "Archbishop Wulfstan: eleventh-century state-builder," 21.

¹⁹ Wormald, "Archbishop Wulfstan and the holiness of society," 208.

²⁰ From Archbishop Oda's Constitutions: "quia illis claves regni celorum date sunt et habent potestatum ligandi atque solvendi" (C&S, no. 20).

key of St Peter is prominent, as is the cross of the risen Christ, which Robert Deshman interprets as the passing of authority from the saviour to the apostles. Saint Peter and his key also appear in the image depicting Pentecost.²¹ The preeminent role of the episcopate is even more vividly portrayed in an image from the Tiberius Psalter, which was produced at Winchester c. 1050. The scene depicting the Pentecost has Christ bestowing a crown on his disciples, the bishops' predecessors, an image Barbara Raw interprets to be a reflection of the supremacy of the Church over the state.²² Wulfstan, however, is careful throughout his writings to give consecrated kingship its due, and while bishops clearly had a prominent role to play, the attention paid to the secular members of society, in particular the wealthy and powerful, demonstrates the extent to which he considered the often perilous state of the kingdom to be a group problem.

The majority of *Polity* concerns the responsibility of the Church's various members to promote its laws and to lead by example. The sections devoted to bishops are, to a certain extent, conventional exhortations to righteousness and conscientiousness. They consist of a fairly routine description of a bishop's day, which was supposed to include prayer, study, observance of the liturgy, the distribution of alms and attendance to administrative matters, as well as an account of virtues and vices. This section in *Polity* implies that bishops, as members of the political elite, were finding it difficult to speak out against the less than commendable behavior of powerful laymen in their midst. For Wulfstan, inaction was tantamount to approval: "grievous is the burden which God's herald must bear if he will not earnestly forbid injustice. For although he himself do good, and another man do ill, it shall injure him if he will not punish it"; and they must "diligently support every righteousness. They must bear in mind the fear of God and not be all too slothful for fear of the world." While there were obviously bishops in his day who did not measure up in personal terms, Wulfstan made certain to point out that "no man ought ever to neglect himself because of a bishop's sins, but follow his teaching if he teach well."²³ Although not altogether unworthy of office by virtue of their sound teaching, these bishops were clearly not the kind of spiritual leaders Wulfstan thought would bring about the regeneration of the English kingdom.

A similar train of thought runs through a shorter, and presumably earlier, Wulfstan text, labeled by its modern editors *An Admonition to Bishops by Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*.²⁴ The text echoes many of the sentiments expressed in *Polity*, but it is far less subtle in exposing some of the problems apparently besetting the episcopate in Wulfstan's day:

Bishops must always preach God's law and forbid wrong, and truly, as soon as bishops keep silent about the right, and as soon as they are afraid and are ashamed of the right,

²¹ R. Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton, 1995), 77 and 107.

²² G 378, f. 15r, in B. Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge, 1990), 146.

²³ *Polity*, 128–9.

²⁴ C&S, no. 55. The first sixteen words of this text in London, BL, Cotton Nero A.i are printed in Wulfstan's hand (C&S, 413).

Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England

and mumble with their jaws when they ought to cry aloud, their dignity at once declines greatly. Yet, however, what I say is the wretched truth: some of us are accustomed to be too yielding and too eager for praise; and we are complaisant to men for friendship, and by that we very often flatter vainly, and keep silent about the truth all too greatly.²⁵

Later in the passage Wulfstan laments that “we ever think most about the things which we least should; we meditate on worldly cares (*woroldcara*) and idle occupations, and strive for power and worldly display (*woroldwlence*).” *Admonition* acknowledges the very real responsibilities of bishops in the world at large, but it also cautions against their being consumed by them.²⁶

If the textual similarities tell us something about Wulfstan’s reuse of his material, the differences between the texts probably tell us something about Wulfstan’s audiences. *Polity* appears to have been written for the *witan* at large, where it would have been necessary to exercise a modicum of diplomacy in describing the corrosive effects of court life on ecclesiastical sensibilities. No such restraint was required at a strictly ecclesiastical synod, where *Admonition* may have been delivered and discussed. It is also interesting to note that *Polity* is far more subtle in its discussion of episcopal power than other Wulfstan texts, perhaps for the same reason. The so-called *Episcopus*, or the *Bishop’s Duties*, begins with the statement that “every direction belongs to a bishop, both in religious and in secular things.”²⁷ The text is particularly concerned with the bishop’s role as chief justice in the diocesan court: “bishops must always dictate judgments along with secular judges, so that, if it is in their power, they do not consent that any wrong springs up there” and “he must not consent to any injustice, neither wrong measure nor false weight; but it is fitting that every law, whether law of a borough or law of a country district, should go by his advice and his witness.”²⁸ *Episcopus* is a vigorous defense of the participation of bishops in secular justice, an activity that Ælfric condemned, it will be remembered, with equal vigor. Although the role of bishops in secular justice is not discussed as explicitly in *Polity* as it is in *Episcopus*, the participation of bishops in diocesan courts had been enshrined in royal law for decades.

A final text of interest, titled by its editor *Injunctions on the Behaviour of Bishops*, is so closely related to *Polity* that, like *Episcopus*, it was printed as part of *Polity* in Thorpe’s 1840 edition. The circumstances that lay behind the text’s appeal for episcopal unity are unknown, but it reiterates the dangers of individual prelates acting on their own behalf (and on behalf of laymen?) rather than on

²⁵ C&S, no. 55, 1–4.

²⁶ A recently published Latin treatise of Wulfstan’s entitled *Admonitio episcoporum utilis* echoes many of the same sentiments. Its editor, Thomas Hall, suggests it was intended as an address for a congregation of bishops. It survives in several manuscripts associated with Wulfstan: G 59, twice; 73; and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barlow 37, which was written in the twelfth century (T. N. Hall, “Wulfstan’s Latin sermons,” in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*, 101–9 and Appendix 1).

²⁷ “Bisceope gebyreð ælc rihting, ge on godcundan þingan ge on woruldcondan” (C&S, no. 56.1).

²⁸ Further, “he must eagerly settle disputes and make peace, along with those secular judges who love right. At an accusation he must regulate the exculpation, so that no man may offer wrong to another either in oath or in ordeal...and every borough measure and every weighing machine is to be truly regulated according to his direction, lest any man do wrong to another and by that sin all too greatly” (C&S, no. 56.4–9).

behalf of God and the Church. Wulfstan reminds his colleagues of the corporate nature of the episcopate, admonishing that:

There is great need for bishops in religious and secular concerns that they be unanimous and all approve one and the same thing; and if wrong is offered to one, they are all to put it right. It befits bishops that each warn one another, if he hears or himself finds out anything about another, and each is to defend another behind his back, and none is to conceal from another what he needs to know, but each is to honour another in word and deed, and to be, as befits them: '*Quasi cor unum et anima*.'²⁹

While the specific context behind this particular appeal is lost to us, it is hardly likely that Wulfstan was speaking of unity solely in matters of the liturgy or even canon law. Calling upon the bishops to watch each other's backs, as it were, *Injunctions* speaks to a high level of political instability that had serious ecclesiastical ramifications, and not to the paranoia of a high-strung prelate.

An examination of these texts suggests that Wulfstan's remedy for the Church was not just reform in the sense of a return to first principles but something altogether grander. Dorothy Bethurum posited many decades ago (after which time the idea disappeared into the historiographical ether until it was revived to some extent by Patrick Wormald) that Wulfstan's texts challenged bishops to dig deeper and find within themselves something worthier of emulation than might ordinarily be demanded of a bishop because the times required it. In Bethurum's words, Wulfstan "shared the feeling of the Continental bishops that it was necessary to present in the person of the bishop a figure of authority and magnificence upon which popular emotion might center."³⁰ To be sure, Wulfstan's bishops were flawed individuals: *Admonition* laments, "ever since bishops have changed their ways from the canonical ways entirely to worldly ways, their dignity has been declining greatly."³¹ All of the texts, including *Polity*, contain references to activities that diminished episcopal dignity, such as drunkenness, idleness and a fondness for buffoonery, sport, dogs, hawks, and other especially worldly pursuits, evidence that Wulfstan intended his bishops to earn their place in the world.³² Yet none of Wulfstan's texts challenges the competency of bishops as priests; rather, it is their image as God's heralds and teachers with which he appears most concerned.

Given the paucity of straightforward evidence for contemporary attitudes toward the exercise of episcopal power, the importance of the Wulfstan corpus cannot be overstated. It must be emphatically acknowledged, however, that it remains impossible, despite the recent scholarly activity, to determine how Wulfstan's writings were actually used, whether they were widely disseminated, or if they had the desired effect. Many of the texts survive only in single copies, and the relationship between texts within manuscripts is often still obscure. It is

²⁹ C&S, no. 54.3–5.

³⁰ D. Bethurum, "Wulfstan," in *Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature*, ed. E. G. Stanley (London, 1966), 215. See also *idem*, "Episcopal magnificence in the eleventh century," in *Studies in Old English Literature in Honor of Arthur G. Brodeur*, ed. S. B. Greenfield (New York, 1973), 162–170.

³¹ C&S, no. 55.13.

³² *Polity*, 59–61, 67–74; C&S, no. 54.8. Bethurum, "Wulfstan" 219.

interesting to note, however, that a Latin version of *Episcopus* survives in the Anglo-Norman *Quadripartitus* as part of Athelstan's laws, which may indicate that it was known beyond Wulfstan's circle.³³ Historians often build cases on hints and inferences, however, and it seems reasonable to conclude that material that sounds synodical was in some way synodical. After all, the third paragraph of *Injunctions* states that each bishop is to have a book of canons (*canonboc*) with him at the synod.³⁴ The prosaic nature of these books might account for why few apparently survived. Patrick Wormald's analysis of the manuscripts associated with Wulfstan shows how various recensions of the texts in separate manuscripts represent different stages in Wulfstan's thinking, thus making it appear that "Nero A.i came off a 'production-line' engaged in the ongoing manufacture of books of this type."³⁵ If, as Dorothy Whitelock once suggested, Wulfstan delivered these texts orally to the synod, it is hardly surprising they do not survive in great number.³⁶ It remains the case that we do not know how most of Wulfstan's texts were used, but it is difficult to imagine that this busy prelate would have devoted so many hours to writing so many different texts for purely esoteric reasons. Perhaps it is simply best to fall back on what we do know about Wulfstan's legacy in the realm of law, which long outlived both author and patron. The legislation that Wulfstan wrote for Cnut, which was also the culmination of his thinking about the perfect Christian polity, was not only the last comprehensive Anglo-Saxon law-code, but "it dominated every essay in legislative reconstruction over the century that ensued."³⁷ If the political theology it embodied had resonated only in the narrowest of circles, it is hard to imagine why this would have been the case.

Like many of his most basic beliefs, the idea that the burdens of holding episcopal office could bring out the worst in some men was not original to Wulfstan. It was, of course, a *topos* of hagiography that saints did their best to avoid holding office because of the corrosive effects of power. Given hagiography's extreme debt to convention, there is probably not much to be learned about actual attitudes toward episcopal power in these texts. Other texts, however, do corroborate many of the ideas expressed in the Wulfstan texts, and are therefore worth bringing into the discussion. Among the most significant was the *Pastoral Care*, a handbook for pastors written in the sixth century by the 'apostle to the English,' Gregory the Great. The Carolingians were devoted to this text; Hincmar, the ninth-century bishop of Rheims, required bishops to hold a copy during their ordinations, so it is not surprising that it survives in some five hundred Latin copies.³⁸ Required reading for bishops across the West, the *Pastoral Care*'s compelling treatment of leadership appealed to King Alfred, so much so that he translated it into the

³³ C&S, 418. Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 185–224.

³⁴ C&S, no. 54.3.

³⁵ Wormald, "Archbishop Wulfstan and the holiness of society," 195, 216 n. 26.

³⁶ C&S, 408.

³⁷ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 365 and note 458.

³⁸ R. Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998), 236.

vernacular and sent copies to each bishopric in the kingdom.³⁹ Less a handbook on the actual mechanics of pastoral care than a treatise on the rightful use of power, Gregory's masterpiece resonated with King Alfred as much as his bishops for its application to leadership of all kinds. The subjects of greatest interest to Gregory were the burdens under which bishops labored, the characteristics required of good bishops, and the weaknesses to which all are subject. The emphasis throughout the text is on moderation.⁴⁰ In Gregory's words,

It is necessary . . . that he should be pure in thought, exemplary in conduct, discreet in keeping silence, profitable in speech, in sympathy a near neighbour to everyone, in contemplation exalted above all others, a humble companion to those who lead good lives, erect in his zeal for righteousness, against the vices of sinners. He must not be remiss in his care for the inner life by preoccupation with the external; nor must he in his solicitude for what is internal, fail to give attention to the external.⁴¹

Allen Frantzen has noted that although it is remarkably faithful to its source, King Alfred's translation, presumably the more influential in Anglo-Saxon England, places greater emphasis on the burdens of leadership and teaching and on the importance of stepping back periodically to take stock of one's life.⁴² For Alfred, as for Wulfstan, education was central not only to a life well lived but to the regeneration of the English people as a whole; leaders had to be teachers and teachers had to be leaders. To provide suitable models, Alfred also translated Gregory's companion volume of *vitae*, the *Dialogi*.⁴³

Many of the same themes are discernible in Alfred's translation of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, which, unlike Gregory's great text, he did rework significantly.⁴⁴ Written from prison not long before he was martyred in the early sixth century, Boethius's text depicts the fall from grace of a once great man. By means of a dialogue with Lady Philosophy that he has in a dream, Boethius eventually comes to terms with the irrelevance of worldly trappings. Recasting the protagonists from Boethius and Lady Philosophy to Mod (mind) and Wisdom (reason), Alfred converts the basic message from that of acceptance of fate to the just exercise of power through wisdom. Alfred's point is that "good men always have power" and that leaders must take responsibility for their actions and not blame their misfortune on fate, as Boethius does. As Richard Abels observes, "wisdom for Alfred entailed not a repudiation of worldly wealth, as it had for Augustine or Boethius, but the knowledge and virtue to use it well."⁴⁵ That good leadership began and ended with wisdom was the theme uniting Alfred's entire

³⁹ C. Schreiber, *King Alfred's Old English Translation of Pope Gregory the Great's Regula pastoralis and Its Cultural Context* (Frankfurt, 2003). Abels, *Alfred the Great*, 237–9, 250–1, 256 and n. 119.

⁴⁰ A. Frantzen, *King Alfred* (Boston, 1986), 31.

⁴¹ Pope Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Care*, ed. H. Davis, *Ancient Christian Writers* 11 (New York, 1950), ii, §1. Also, ". . . every preacher should make himself heard rather by deeds than words, and that by his righteous way of life should imprint footsteps for men to tread in, rather than show them by word the way to go" (iii, §40).

⁴² Frantzen, *King Alfred*, 32–3.

⁴³ M. Kempshall, "No bishop, no king: the ministerial ideology of kingship and Asser's *Res Gestae Alfredi*," in *Belief and Culture*, 113.

⁴⁴ For what follows, see Frantzen, *King Alfred*, 45–60.

⁴⁵ Abels, *Alfred the Great*, 253.

program, and it was represented visually on the *æstel* that apparently accompanied each translation of the *Pastoral Care*. Scholars generally agree that the wide-eyed figure portrayed on the crystal bookmark is that of Christ as True Wisdom.⁴⁶ That both translations were popular beyond Alfred's court circle is borne out by the fact that Ælfric apparently preferred them to the Latin originals.⁴⁷ Likewise, manuscript evidence shows that both versions were available in a number of communities in late Anglo-Saxon England.⁴⁸ One of Alfred's many legacies was to promote the pastoral dimensions of kingship, which bore more than superficial similarities to episcopal ministry. As Catherine Karkov observes, "it is . . . around learning, wisdom and devotion, manifested in the production, patronage and representation of texts, that the visual image of Anglo-Saxon governance will revolve."⁴⁹

So far the discussion has virtually ignored the question of monastic influence on English attitudes. The emphasis on moderation certainly suggests such an influence. When the religious life was redefined in late Antiquity as a journey that could include both active and contemplative stages, monks could become bishops as long as they exercised episcopal authority with a certain "spirit of detachment." Even Gregory the Great put aside his skepticism to become the first monk-pope and to send a party of monks to re-evangelize England.⁵⁰ Bede's ideal pastors, who were more often than not monks, were clearly those who, like Gregory, blended the two forms of Christian life, active and contemplative.⁵¹ As Simon Coates has written, "their ability to move inward to embrace a life of contemplation and meditation was linked to their ability to move outward to embrace the wider needs of the world."⁵² But that the active and the contemplative could be combined profitably in the secular clergy and even laymen is equally clear. As Martin Claussen has recently demonstrated, Chrodegang, the eighth-century bishop of Metz and author of the influential rule for canons, embraced the view that all activities, as long as they were directed toward God, were acceptable, a view he derived in part from the fifth-century writer Julianus Pomerius's treatise, *De vita contemplativa*. Neither Chrodegang nor Pomerius was an intellectual

⁴⁶ P. Wormald, "The ninth century," in *The Anglo-Saxons*, ed. J. Campbell, E. John and P. Wormald (Oxford, 1982), 157; Abels, *Alfred the Great*, 256 and n. 119. Catherine Karkov notes that Gregory the Great equated crystal with Christ in a homily known to the English (C. Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), 28–9 and fig. 3).

⁴⁷ M. Godden, "Ælfric and the vernacular prose tradition," in *The Old English Homily*, ed. P. Szarmach and B. Huppé (Albany, 1978), 102–4.

⁴⁸ Gregory (Latin: G 261, 346f, 439.6f, 590, 684, 742, 771f, 800e, 833, 894 and 898.5; vernacular copies G 14, 37, 180, 353, 375f and 626). Boethius's original text survives in G 12, 23, 68, 392e, 408f, 613.9, 671, 678f, 776, 823, 829, 886, 887 and 908; Alfred's translation in G 347 and 643f.

⁴⁹ Karkov, *Ruler Portraits*, 5. See also R. Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 2002), 95–100.

⁵⁰ R. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1998), 185, 190–1; *idem*, *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge, 1997).

⁵¹ A. Thacker, "Bede's ideal of reform," in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. P. Wormald (Oxford, 1983), 132; and S. J. Coates, "The bishop as pastor and solitary: Bede and the spiritual authority of the monk-bishop," *JEH* 47 (October, 1996), 601–19.

⁵² Coates, "The bishop as pastor and solitary," 618–19; Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 73–8.

lightweight; the latter, in Claussen's estimation, "channelled Augustinian thought into Gaul."⁵³ The influence of Chrodegangian spirituality will be taken up in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here that the same sentiment is reflected in a rule probably in use at the secular cathedral of St Paul's, London, toward the end of our period: "there are some who can wear a worldly habit, and yet not have a worldly mind . . . Reflect on that when you cannot give up all those things which are of the world: do well what you have to do outside in the world, but let your zeal be within, impatient for the things that are eternal."⁵⁴ Early texts such as those of Bede, which reflect a thoroughly monasticized Church, not surprisingly exalt men and women who, regardless of their circumstances, manage to embrace their "inner ascetic." But it is clear that this theme continued to influence the definition of holiness for centuries to come. Indeed, as chapter 4 will show, pastoral care in the late Anglo-Saxon period was deeply influenced by monastic values.

Once the tenth-century reform movement was in full swing, no one appears to have seriously questioned the appropriateness of monks being elevated to the episcopate. Indeed, the image of St Benedict in the *Benedictional of Æthelwold* depicts him wearing a pallium when the monk was not a bishop, much less an archbishop. Richard Deshman has interpreted this as Æthelwold's not-so-subtle attempt to advance the cause of monastic bishops.⁵⁵ Yet the possibility that some remained sensitive to its implications is suggested by a treatise bearing Archbishop Wulfstan's handwriting and appearing in one of his manuscripts. Entitled *De activa vita et contemplativa*, the recently published text is based on Bede's homily for the feast of St John the Baptist, but it also bears, interestingly enough, striking resemblance to the eponymous text by Julianus Pomerius. It seems tailor made, in some respects, to a pious archbishop who, even if he had not taken monastic vows, identified with its virtues so much so that he desired to be buried in an abbey church rather than at the seat of his power: "the contemplative life is, brethren, when a man, schooled by long practice of doing good, made ready by the sweetness of divine prayer, made accustomed by the frequent pain of tears, has learned to be free from all the business of the world."⁵⁶ One wonders if perhaps Wulfstan, if he indeed was a secular priest, understood this passage as encouraging him to take monastic vows in his old age.

There is nothing in the evidence, then, to suggest that Anglo-Saxons or their contemporaries on the Continent had any serious misgivings about the participation of monks in the episcopate. Indeed, the misrepresentation of monastic participation in secular affairs by many later (and some modern) historians has tended

⁵³ M. Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church: Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula canonicorum in the Eighth Century* (Cambridge, 2004), 186–9. Two English manuscripts of the Pomerius text are extant, although probably post-Conquest in date.

⁵⁴ *Registrum Statutorum . . . Cathedralis S. Pauli Londiniensis*, ed. W. S. Simpson (London, 1873), 38ff, quoted in C. Brooke, *London 800–1216: The Shaping of a City* (London, 1975), 340. For the likelihood that the text was at early eleventh-century St Paul's, where Wulfstan used it, see D. Whitelock, *Some Anglo-Saxon Bishops of London* (London, 1975), 29.

⁵⁵ Deshman, *Benedictional*, 172 and pl. 31.

⁵⁶ The manuscript is G 383, fo. 177v; the edition and commentary are in G. Mann, "The development of Wulfstan's Alcuin manuscript," in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*, 268–78. For the text of Pomerius, see Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 187.

to obscure the very prominent role monks had played in the formation of English episcopal ideology from the outset. Monks had founded the English Church, and if by the turn of the tenth century they were less common in the episcopate, they were back in full force by the turn of the eleventh, when it was virtually impossible to be appointed to the English episcopate without this credential. Indeed, from c. 990 until c. 1030, the secular bishop was a rarity indeed.⁵⁷ Nowhere was it even hinted that these bishops were meant to be any less “worldly” than their secular colleagues. Tenth-century hagiography, for instance, makes no bones about the fact that while pious, Dunstan, Æthelwold and Oswald were all men of the world. Given the purpose of the genre, which was to promote the sanctity of its subjects, it is highly unlikely that political and administrative acumen would have been featured so prominently if such traits were in any way embarrassing to the hagiographers. One of Dunstan’s early *vitae* clearly emphasizes the archbishop’s “outer” virtues over his inner ones. The hagiographer “B” has the king confer the title “prince and powerful possessor” (*princeps potensque insessor*) upon him, for instance, when he was made abbot of Glastonbury. One wonders what he was called at his archiepiscopal consecration! As David Rollason remarks, “Dunstan’s actions [in B.] are clearly being presented to us as appropriate to a saint, and they are actions not of humility but of authority.”⁵⁸ Not surprisingly, the manifesto of the reform movement, the *Regularis concordia*, places no limitations on the monk-bishop in the secular arena: rather it seeks only to shape, in rather conventional terms, his approach to his secular duties. In the section of the Prologue dealing with episcopal election, Æthelwold (or Dunstan) writes “nor shall he, by reason of his episcopal office, proudly or forgetfully dare to neglect the ordinances of the Rule but, as he excels in honour, so let him, together with the flock subject to him, excel also in holy deeds.”⁵⁹ The iconography of the *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, for one, repeatedly supports the idea of monastic rule in a secular as well as ecclesiastical context. Not only does Benedict wear the pallium, but he appears in another image sporting the diadem reserved in the manuscript for Christ.⁶⁰ The appearance of large numbers of abbots on charter witness lists in this period, indicative of their attendance at large meetings of the *witan*, corroborates the impression that, by the turn of the eleventh century, monks in general were playing a more aggressive role in the secular arena. It may give us a better sense of the contours of reformed monasticism in the eleventh century when we recall the fact that many of the bishops about whom Wulfstan wrote, the ones who indulged in hunting, drinking and the flattery of noblemen, had to have been

⁵⁷ Between 988 and 1038, not only were the six archbishops of Canterbury all monks, but they all came from the same abbey, Glastonbury (D. Dales, *Dunstan: Saint and Statesman* (Cambridge, 1988), 56). For the transition back to secular bishops in the mid eleventh century, see Smith, “The preferment of royal clerks,” 159–73.

⁵⁸ D. Rollason, “The concept of sanctity in the early lives of St Dunstan,” in *St Dunstan*, 269. The background of “B” is uncertain. Alan Thacker suggests he was a clerk of Liège (“Cults at Canterbury: relics and reform under Dunstan and his successors,” in *St Dunstan*, 223), but Michael Lapidge argues he was an English monk (“B. and the *Vita S. Dunstani*,” in his *Anglo-Latin Literature*, 281).

⁵⁹ RC, prologue, §8.

⁶⁰ Deshman, *Benedictional*, 119 and pl. 33.

professed monks and not the seculars against whom William of Malmesbury would rail a century later.

Courtly Values

If consideration turns from texts to the milieu in which they probably circulated, other influences on episcopal ideology become apparent, some of which had little to do with the Church or even Christianity. Humility and moderation were, after all, classical aristocratic virtues long before they were Benedictine ones. In a groundbreaking study of Continental episcopal biography (as opposed to hagiography), C. Stephen Jaeger detected a higher degree of influence of the classical rhetorical tradition in general and of humanist values in particular than ascetic values on the production of secularized Christian biography, the genre to which episcopal biography belonged in the tenth and eleventh centuries.⁶¹ Unlike hagiography, which rarely depicts the faults of its subjects, secular biography follows the classical model of portraying great men as they were, warts and all. These texts therefore tell us a great deal more about contemporary attitudes toward the exercise of power than saints' lives because they depict their subjects in more than one dimension. It is true, of course, that no such biographies survive from Anglo-Saxon England. Perhaps the genre held no appeal, but it is equally possible that no representative texts survive. I do think, however, that Jaeger's work bears strongly on this discussion, for several reasons. The Anglo-Saxon Church did not operate in a vacuum, especially at the level of the episcopate. As David Rollason also pointed out in his analysis of Dunstan's *vitae*, the values they espouse were very similar to those in the life of the Continental saint-bishop, Bruno of Cologne (d. 965). This is not a coincidence, as one of the more significant influences Jaeger detected, which I will soon argue holds true for Anglo-Saxon England as well, was the royal (or imperial) court.

The story of Adalbert, archbishop of Bremen from 1043 to 1072, is one of the more interesting for our purposes. According to his biographer, Adam of Bremen, Adalbert started his career in the royal chapel, as had many tenth and eleventh-century western, even monastic, bishops. He was virtuous in many respects, but Adam thought his greatness was compromised by a lack of moderation, particularly at his episcopal court.⁶² He tells us that, financing an exorbitant lifestyle at court largely through taxation, Adalbert compromised his pastoral mission by his quest for worldly glory. Another writer opined that, living more like a prince than a pastor, he "insinuated himself into the king's favor . . . not to root out the weeds of vice with the hand of episcopal authority, but to water the seeds with flattery."⁶³ Despite losing everything for a time, Adalbert was incapable of mending his ways, and ultimately everything was taken away from

⁶¹ C. S. Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939–1210* (Philadelphia, 1985), 25–6.

⁶² Jaeger, *Origins*, 70–1.

⁶³ Bruno of Merseburg, ch. 5, 16, paraphrased in Jaeger, *Origins*, 73.

him: he was banished from court and died a lonely and broken man. Perhaps worse still, his diocese fell apart and many reverted to paganism. Adam thought this story all the more tragic because Adalbert had many virtues. His lack of moderation was simply allowed to overshadow those virtues, with obviously tragic consequences: “worldly glory, throngs of guests and exalted nobility,” he wrote, “these things which you loved so, what good are they to you now, o venerable father Adalbert? See how lonely you lie in your high palace, abandoned by all your court. Where now are all your doctors, your flatterers and hypocrites, who lauded the desires of your soul . . .?”⁶⁴ For Adam, it was the court that ruined Adalbert. To Jaeger’s mind, “Adalbert was oddly suspended between the mentality of the duke and the mentality of the bishop. But the alliance of mentalities, far from doubling his resources, had the opposite effect: it paralyzed him.”⁶⁵ Although no Anglo-Saxon bishops formally wielded secular as well as spiritual swords, as Continental bishops often did, many were nevertheless rich and powerful like Adalbert. His story, if they knew it, must have caused more than a few to reflect upon their ways.

In the process of analyzing these texts, Jaeger identified a set of values particularly associated with the great courtier bishops of the tenth and eleventh centuries: the aesthetic *mores* of beauty, elegance and grace, combined with the religious virtues of humility, moderation and compassion and the administrative talents of diligence, discretion and shrewdness.⁶⁶ These are core values in the *vitae* of the reformer-bishops, Dunstan, Æthelwold and Oswald, as well as other English men and women. In other words, even if Anglo-Saxons were not reading these particular texts, there is clearly an affinity between them, doubtless arising from the similarity between courts in this period and the role of bishops in them. Jaeger calls this phenomenon “courtly humanism,” and while he acknowledges that it probably originated in imperial courts, he also argues it was a phenomenon common to educated and worldly clergymen across Europe.⁶⁷ If we consider, as John Gillingham has, English secular texts, the correlation is just as strong. “Courtly and restrained aristocratic virtues” are indeed displayed throughout the poem, *Battle of Maldon*; the panegyric to King Cnut and his wife, the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*; and the *vita* of King Edward the Confessor, chief among them *mansuetudo* or gentleness of spirit, which Jaeger considers “the civic virtue par excellence.”⁶⁸ Who was reading (or hearing) what is notoriously difficult to pin down, but it is possible that episcopal *vitae*, as well as the secular texts, enjoyed wider popularity than is generally thought. This is certainly one conclusion to be drawn from James Campbell’s examination of *Maldon*’s cultural setting, a “courtly monastic/aristocratic milieu” in which both monks of the reform party and their secular aristocratic colleagues shared many interests, including possibly

⁶⁴ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ch. 65 in Jaeger, *Origins*, 78–80.

⁶⁵ Jaeger, *Origins*, 71.

⁶⁶ Jaeger, *Origins*, 32–6.

⁶⁷ Jaeger, *Origins*, 27–8.

⁶⁸ J. Gillingham, “Thegns and knights in eleventh-century England: who was then the gentleman?” *TRHS* Sixth Series 5 (1995), 147–50. Jaeger, *Origins*, 37.

Latin literature. Another is that “magnificence is characteristic of much in the tenth-century monastic revival and of much that made it attractive to the aristocrats who led and patronized it.”⁶⁹ It was also in this context that the nobleman Æthelweard commissioned a collection of saints’ lives from Ælfric.⁷⁰

The influence of the court is further detectable in the practice of aristocratic piety, both lay and clerical, a piety that was both active and tactile rather than introspective and abstract. Mary Frances Smith, Robin Fleming and Patricia Halpin have recently shown that the marker of this piety was conspicuous public expenditure (and to some extent consumption), expressed most often in the donation of very costly objects (such as large gold crosses), by relic collecting (and donating) on a grand scale, and by the extravagant support of communities of canons.⁷¹ It was a piety shared by kings, bishops, abbots, earls, thegns and aristocratic women, and it was mediated through their participation in court life. Although William of Malmesbury considered such piety vulgar, and hints throughout his work that the Normans shared his opinion, Norman aristocrats and prelates were nevertheless more than happy to confiscate many of the extraordinary pious donations of Anglo-Saxons to adorn the walls, altars and libraries of Norman abbeys.⁷² Because of post-Conquest pilfering, it is difficult to obtain an accurate picture of the scope of gift-giving in the eleventh century. Even the limited evidence is consistent, however, with the attitudes reflected in contemporary insular and Continental literature.⁷³

The values of the Church’s highest leaders were clearly shaped, to some extent, by their exposure to the court. In some cases, though, they were learned in court schools. Many of the most important English bishops spent time at court as adolescents; Dunstan and Oswald probably did so because they were related to contemporary archbishops of Canterbury.⁷⁴ Even within this ideologically-charged group, it is interesting to note that recognition at court at a young age was desirable. Thus, when Æthelwold was young, “he spent a long period there in the royal *burh* as the king’s inseparable companion, learning much from the king’s *witan* that was useful and profitable to him.”⁷⁵ Future bishops often received their early educations at court alongside members of the royal family and sons of leading aristocratic families, when there were obvious ecclesiastical alternatives to hand, and some, like Æthelwold, returned the favor by tutoring royal children

⁶⁹ J. Campbell, “England, c. 991,” in *The Battle of Maldon. Fiction and Fact*, ed. J. Cooper (London and Rio Grande, 1993), 1–17.

⁷⁰ That Ælfric’s patron, Æthelweard, had more than a passing interest in the *vitae* is suggested by the fact that he asked Ælfric to include the Passion of St Thomas, whose orthodoxy was apparently questionable (J. Hill, “Reform and resistance: preaching styles in late Anglo-Saxon England,” in *De l’Homélie au Sermon. Histoire de la Prédication Médiévale*, ed. J. Hamesse and X. Hermand (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993), n. 35).

⁷¹ M. F. Smith, R. Fleming and P. Halpin, “Court and piety in late Anglo-Saxon England,” *CHR* 87 (2001), 569–602.

⁷² Dumville, “Anglo-Saxon books,” 83–99.

⁷³ For the reasons why so many later sources are hostile to the courtly values of this period, see C. S. Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950–1200* (Philadelphia, 1994).

⁷⁴ *VSD*, 55; *VSÆ*, §7; *VSO*, 20. Dales, *Dunstan*, chapter 3.

⁷⁵ *VSÆ*, §7.

later in their careers.⁷⁶ Perhaps because the largest and wealthiest cathedrals were Benedictine monasteries, they did not become court schools along the lines of eleventh-century German and Frankish cathedrals such as Cologne, Liège, and Rheims. In any case, the interest of a young Dunstan or Æthelwold in currying royal favor implies, together with the piecemeal literary and material evidence discussed above, that historians have undervalued the role of the court in the formation of ecclesiastical attitudes.

Sacralizing Political Discourse

If bishops were generally comfortable at court, and there is no evidence to suggest that they were not, it was in part because they had played such a prominent role in defining the political discourses of the early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. The process had been gradual, but by the late ninth century, royal election had accumulated divine as well as political and dynastic dimensions, and both the liturgy of consecration and royal law had already begun to reflect the assimilation of episcopal and royal ideology. Political theory in England between Alfred and Wulfstan was based primarily on ninth-century Carolingian ideas; in effect, the king was God's deputy on earth, anointed by bishops through the status-changing rite of consecration to provide for the spiritual as well as physical well-being of his people. Once consecrated, he could not be removed from office, regardless of his failings.⁷⁷ King Offa of Mercia must have seen something of the ideology's potential when he had his son Ecgrith anointed as his successor in 786 or 787.⁷⁸

It was not until the reign of King Alfred, however, that English political theory acquired its Old Testament framework. Alfred's preface to his law-code invites the English to be a new Chosen People, while his translations (and Asser's biography of the king) place the Wisdom of Solomon at the core of a just society.⁷⁹ Robert Stanton has argued that through his works, "the king himself became a crucial intermediary, a transmitter of a body of knowledge, a code of behaviour, and a tradition of wisdom."⁸⁰ But this was no mere literary exercise. As Wormald observed, Alfred's "sustained comparison of English law with what God gave Moses implied dramatic new ambitions for his people. Crime could now be perceived as an outrage against God, punishment as the expression of His

⁷⁶ See *VSÆ*, xlv, n. 20. From William of Malmesbury's *vita* of Dunstan: "The archbishop's favour was backed by the young man's diligence, which soon made him personally acceptable to king and court alike. He was taken into the inner circle, and there was no one of his age at court who could move more familiarly in the king's presence, or converse more agreeably with him" (*VSD*, ed. Winterbottom and Thomson, §5). For education before the reform period, see Bullough, "The educational tradition," 453–94.

⁷⁷ Ælfric's sermon for Palm Sunday (*CH*, I, no. 14).

⁷⁸ The rite that was used is unknown, but Janet Nelson has suggested that the list of prayers contained in the early tenth-century *Leofric Missal* may represent the earliest West Saxon consecration *ordo* (J. N. Nelson, "Ritual and reality in the early medieval *ordines*," in her *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), 331).

⁷⁹ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 426–9; Stanton, *Culture of Translation*, 91–100.

⁸⁰ Stanton, *Culture of Translation*, 99.

anger.”⁸¹ With all due respect to Alfred’s intellectual achievements, such revolutionary thinking must have been fostered in great measure by his ecclesiastical advisors, who had a lot to gain from such a reconceptualization of royal power. They must also have prepared an appropriate coronation ritual for God’s anointed, but no record of it survives.

The Second English *Ordo*, which was apparently in use c. 900, does, however, reflect kingship as Alfred and his episcopal counselors defined it. The religiosity of the earlier rite, which was little more than a list of prayers, was enhanced by the addition of a ring, sword and staff, the first two of which were symbols of earthly authority and the last a symbol of the king’s relationship to Christ, the just ruler.⁸² The most significant change, though, was the addition of the prayer *Sta et retine* at the end of the ceremony. As Janet Nelson explains, “*sta et retine*, in particular, refers to the king as *mediator cleri et plebes* in an explicit analogy with Christ’s function as *mediator Dei et hominum*.”⁸³ After this prayer followed the king’s statement of the three precepts of good government, central to which was the notion of good justice, and to which the crowd responded with acclamations of *vivat rex*. This consecration ritual, which bears no small resemblance to the ritual of clerical consecration, conflated the sacred and the secular, not just in the figure of the king but in that of the bishops, who, as officiants, bridged the gap between the heavenly and earthly kings as well as the king and his subjects. The symbolism was further heightened by the first appearance, as far as we know, of actual crowning, which was apparently not part of consecration liturgies before Alfred’s time.⁸⁴

Despite its enhancements, the Second *Ordo* must have left something to be desired because it was revised later in the tenth century. The net effect of the changes was to further increase the power of the ecclesiastical members of the king’s court. The Revised Second *Ordo* places the three precepts of good government, which used to end the rite, at the beginning, and makes the king’s former statement, now promises, the *condition* of his consecration.⁸⁵ Ælfric interpreted this to mean that “the king, after he is consecrated, *then* has dominion over his people.”⁸⁶ The office, it seems, could no longer be held legitimately without the status-changing rite of consecration. The *ordo* was probably revised for Edgar’s coronation and, once again, contains striking parallels with both abbatial and episcopal consecrations. Edgar had been ruling since 959 but he was consecrated (or reconsecrated) in 973 at the age of thirty, the minimum canonical age for being made a bishop.⁸⁷ That he was consecrated on Whitsunday, which recalls the creation of the episcopate in the first apostles, underscored the parallels between

⁸¹ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 429.

⁸² Karkov, *Ruler Portraits*, 86; R. Deshman, “*Benedictus monarcha et monachus*: early medieval ruler theology and the Anglo-Saxon reform,” *Frümittelalterliche Studien* 22 (1988), 197.

⁸³ Nelson, “Ritual and reality,” 334–5.

⁸⁴ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 447.

⁸⁵ Nelson suggests either Dunstan or Æthelwold as revisers (Nelson, “Second English *Ordo*,” 370–1).

⁸⁶ *CH*, I, 212, translated in *EHD*, I, 851.

⁸⁷ Nelson, “Second English *Ordo*,” 370. This was also the age at which Jesus began his public ministry; scholarly opinion is divided as to whether this was a coincidence.

the royal and episcopal offices. Archbishop Oswald's biographer clearly meant to emphasize these parallels when he recorded that Oswald was crowned by Edgar with two diadems, one for Mercia and the other for Northumbria, the year before.⁸⁸ Oswald, along with Dunstan, returned the favor in 973: suffused with all the political and religious symbolism the bishops could muster, Edgar's Pentecost coronation must have been an extraordinary event, not just in the life of the king but in the lives of his subjects lay and ecclesiastical.

This coronation ritual was imbued with unprecedented religiosity. Although a king would never be a clergyman in the technical sense, the distinction was now hazier than ever. The textual themes were further supported by the iconography of several contemporary manuscripts, including the aforementioned *Benedictional of Æthelwold*. Although it does not contain a text for royal consecration, this bishop's book contains some of the earliest images of the crowned Christ and Virgin, as well as the Magi as kings.⁸⁹ In the miniature depicting Christ's baptism, angels crown him with a diadem and other royal regalia, conferring dual authority as both king and priest.⁹⁰ That these images appear in a book written for Bishop Æthelwold is not surprising given his role as chief tutor and advisor to King Edgar and undoubtedly one of the architects of his coronation.⁹¹ That the bishop envisioned earthly rulership as a joint exercise between consecrated kings and bishops (preferably monastic) is further suggested by a remarkable image in a Canterbury manuscript of the second quarter of the eleventh century but based on a tenth-century model. The miniature, which precedes a copy of the *Regularis concordia*, depicts King Edgar enthroned, flanked by Dunstan and Æthelwold, all of whom are linked in their promotion of reformed monasticism by a scroll connecting them to a monk genuflecting beneath them. The positioning of the bishops suggests they shared power with Edgar, and not just over the kingdom's reformed communities.⁹² The interrelationship of royal and abbatial power is underscored by Edgar's depiction, in terms of clothing, as an abbot rather than a king.⁹³ If the point were not clear enough, the frontispiece to a copy of the *Rule of St Benedict*, which appears later in the same manuscript, portrays the saint wearing a diadem.⁹⁴

That Edgar himself subscribed to these ideas can hardly be doubted; he certainly supported the tenth-century Benedictine movement both before and after his consecration. Not only did he sponsor the conversion of Winchester to a monastic cathedral and the re-establishment of other foundations, back the removal of ecclesiastical lands from lay control and grant immunities to protect

⁸⁸ VSO, c. 4, in Deshman, "Benedictus," 208.

⁸⁹ G 301. R. Deshman, "Christus rex et magi reges: kingship and Christology in Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon art," *Frümittelalterliche Studien* 10 (1976), 377.

⁹⁰ Deshman, *Benedictional*, 193.

⁹¹ It is difficult to miss the extent to which this benedictional is suffused with royal imagery: no fewer than eight of the thirty images, whose subjects were not typically associated with royal imagery, featured crowns, diadems or other royal symbols (Deshman, *Benedictional*, 192).

⁹² G 363, f. 2v. Deshman, *Benedictional*, 209 and fig. 138.

⁹³ Deshman, *Benedictional*, 203.

⁹⁴ G 363, f. 117v. Deshman, *Benedictional*, fig. 137. See also Deshman, *Benedictional*, fig. 136 (G 306, f. 133), discussed above, in which Benedict is similarly diademed.

religious communities in the future, but he took virtual control of abbatial appointments to protect the monastic church from lay (and presumably episcopal) interference. In return, he was rewarded with the grand consecration described above, the loyalty of the Church, and a lifetime of unprecedented liturgical commemoration by the kingdom's monasteries. The frontispiece to the New Minster Charter portrays the *quid pro quo* of Edgar's support for reformed monasticism: he is depicted presenting his foundation charter directly to an enthroned Christ, whose blessing not only confers upon him the role of vicar of Christ, but also implies the king's eventual salvation. The Virgin Mary and St Peter, who flank the earthly king, hold the cross and cross-keys, both of which were represented in the coronation *ordo* and were, moreover, "cognate symbols of judgment, protection and victory," not to mention salvation.⁹⁵

If the literary works of Alfred's reign and the images of Edgar's reflect the confidence of their bishops in God's choice of kings to rule over them, the same cannot be said for Wulfstan's legal, homiletic and canonical corpus, which is suffused with disappointment. Consecrated kingship clearly had its limitations, and those limitations are expressed in *Polity*, whose section on kingship is hardly effusive in its praise. Yet Wulfstan chose to minimize the damage by elevating the status of the clergy and by doing his best to work with the kings God had given him. If Wulfstan and his episcopal colleagues had wanted to undercut royal power to some degree by taking away its sacramental status, as had happened on the Continent, they probably could have. But the liturgical evidence speaks against the likelihood that Cnut's consecration ritual was revised in any significant way.⁹⁶ Wulfstan does not appear to have given up on the potential inherent in sacral kingship, even though he had witnessed some of its worst abuses.

Nothing is known of Cnut's consecration, except that it is probably memorialized in the frontispiece of the *Liber Vitae* of the New Minster; here, the king receives a crown from Christ by means of an angel, while his queen, Emma, receives a veil. Jan Gerchow has argued that the commemoration miniature was not simply a donor portrait, nor merely a coronation picture, but a symbol of Cnut's rebirth as a good Christian king through his acceptance into the *memoria* of the Winchester monks.⁹⁷ It also recalls the image of Edgar in the New Minster Charter, an association the king and his bishops were doubtless eager to make.⁹⁸ The importance of the Church in legitimizing Cnut's rule is obvious. Unlike William the Conqueror, he had no churchmen of his own to replace those he did not trust or to promote his kingship. Indeed, as a recent convert to Christianity, Cnut was starting from scratch. One indication that his transformation was a

⁹⁵ G 382, f. 2v (Karkov, *Ruler Portraits*, 86 and fig. 7). For Peter's role, see also V. Thompson, *Dying and Death in Later Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), 198–206.

⁹⁶ D. Bethurum Loomis, "Regnum and sacerdotium in the early eleventh century," in *England Before the Conquest*, 133.

⁹⁷ London, BL Stowe 944. J. Gerchow, "Prayers for King Cnut: the liturgical commemoration of a conqueror," in *England in the Eleventh Century*, 237–8. The sword is a noteworthy addition to English ruler iconography here (Karkov, *Ruler Portraits*, 135).

⁹⁸ R. Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Oxford, 1995), 22; Karkov, *Ruler Portraits*, 123.

success, however, was the unprecedented level of his commemoration in English obituary lists.⁹⁹

Given the significance of anointing, contested consecrations are, not surprisingly, more numerous in the decades following the death of Cnut, whose offspring refused to play nicely together. The king's illegitimate son, Harold Harefoot, apparently sought consecration from Archbishop Æthelnoth but was refused, a situation made more difficult by the archbishop's possession of the royal crown.¹⁰⁰ Neither Edward the Confessor nor Harold Godwineson had any trouble locating a crown or a willing archbishop, although some debate remains as to where the former was consecrated and who consecrated the latter. Several versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* place Edward's consecration at Winchester, while the anonymous *Vita Ædwardi Regis* gives that honor to Canterbury.¹⁰¹ In terms of Harold, John of Worcester records that the earl was consecrated by Archbishop Ealdred, while the Norman William of Poitiers and Orderic Vitalis attribute the deed to Archbishop Stigand, doubtless to cast aspersions on its legitimacy.¹⁰²

Because Harold was king on the eve of the Conquest, it is not surprising that many details surrounding his short reign were subject to historiographical manipulation. It is not even clear which rite was used to consecrate him. It has generally been assumed that the Revised Second *Ordo* was used, but Janet Nelson argued in the early 1980s that the same ritual, the Third English *Ordo*, was used first for Harold Godwineson and then subsequently for William the Conqueror. Although the earliest manuscripts date to the twelfth century, Nelson makes a reasonable case for attributing this splicing together of the Revised Second *Ordo* and the royal rites from the tenth-century Romano-German Pontifical to Archbishop Ealdred, whose connections with the Rhineland were manifold. Ealdred spent the year 1054 at the court of Herman, archbishop of Cologne, the idea of a successor to Edward the Confessor probably very much on his mind, and during this time he attended the coronation of the future emperor, Henry IV in which the *PRG* was used.¹⁰³ At least four manuscripts, with affinities to mid-eleventh-century Cologne, York or both, further reveal the text's presence in England well before the Conquest.¹⁰⁴ Ealdred could certainly have written the new *ordo* as early as the 1050s, which means it would have been available for use during Harold's consecration. It certainly stands to reason that Ealdred, who had imperial images in his head and an imperial setting in Westminster Abbey, would have had an appropriate liturgy prepared to inaugurate the next English king. Winds of change had

⁹⁹ Gerchow, "Prayers for King Cnut," 238.

¹⁰⁰ S 959 and *EER*, iii, §1. The latter source was, however, and for obvious reasons, hostile to Harold's claim to the throne.

¹⁰¹ See Karkov, *Ruler Portraits*, 167.

¹⁰² JW, s.a. 1066; *EHD*, II, 218; and OV, 137. It should be recalled, though, that William's choice for the bishopric of Dorchester, Remigius, does appear to have been consecrated by Stigand in 1067 (D. Bates, *Bishop Remigius of Lincoln, 1067–1092* (Lincoln, 1992), 4–8).

¹⁰³ JW, s.a. 1054. J. Nelson, "The rites of the Conqueror," in *Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies*, ed. R. Allen Brown (Woodbridge, 1981), 125–7.

¹⁰⁴ G 51, 73, 376 and 406.5, in Nelson, "The rites of the Conqueror," 125.

indeed been in the air, but once again, they were blowing from eastern Frankia and not Normandy.

Despite the legitimacy conferred by consecration, William the Conqueror's coronation did not go smoothly, if contemporary evidence is to be believed. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the archbishop of York made the new king give "a pledge on the Gospels, and [he] swore an oath besides, before Ealdred would place the crown on his head, that he would govern this nation according to the best practice of his predecessors if they would be loyal to him."¹⁰⁵ At some point in the process, however, the English people had to voice their approval, and they supposedly did so with so much gusto that overzealous Norman knights misinterpreted the raised voices coming from inside the abbey and set fire to the surrounding buildings. The bishops barely managed to consecrate the king, who was, according to Orderic Vitalis, visibly shaken by the ensuing chaos.¹⁰⁶ So much for the solemnity of royal consecration in the eleventh century.

Bishops and the Witan

Because it gave divine imprimatur to a king's rule, and made it effectively impossible to remove him from office, consecration clearly elevated the status of the king. But the implications for episcopal power were almost as great. In Nelson's words, "the king was now the bishops' creature, and in a quite literal sense their right-hand man."¹⁰⁷ In practical terms, the ability to influence the shape and direction of society through leadership of the *witan* was one of the most significant by-products of consecrated kingship. If, as historians have argued, the evidence for ecclesiastical synods is less plentiful in the later Anglo-Saxon period, it is only because it is more difficult to differentiate the ecclesiastical from the secular in the increasingly sacralized political discourse of the tenth and eleventh centuries. When royal and episcopal interests were as closely aligned as they were in this period, separate meetings were not only unnecessary but they would probably have been considered counterproductive.

It is notoriously difficult to view the *witan* in action, particularly in the tenth century, except through a consideration of law-making. Not every English king felt the need to issue a law-code in his own name, but those that did – Alfred, Edward the Elder, Æthelstan, Edmund, Edgar, Æthelred and Cnut – enlisted the services of bishops to express in writing the principles of justice to which the lay members of the *witan* had also given their consent. Patrick Wormald has identified some of the driving forces behind otherwise anonymous tenth-century codes. Much of Æthelstan's legal output, for example, he has attributed to Archbishop Wulfhelm of Canterbury, who perhaps wrote and certainly oversaw the

¹⁰⁵ ASC, s.a. 1066 (D).

¹⁰⁶ OV, 184 (but see Nelson, "The rites of the Conqueror," 214 n. 48 for doubts about this story).

¹⁰⁷ J. Nelson, "National synods, kingship and royal anointing," in Nelson, *Politics and Ritual*, 253.

promulgation of the major code of the reign, II Æthelstan, as well as several revisions.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, Archbishop Oda was probably instrumental in drafting I Edmund and Bishop Æthelwold some, if not all, of Edgar's legislation.¹⁰⁹

Regardless of who wrote them, the codes reflect more than just the need to commit customary law to writing. They were also part of the ideological package of Christian kingship inaugurated by Alfred, who placed his law-code firmly in the context of the divine law given to Moses (more than a fifth of the *domboc*, after all, is taken up by the Mosaic preface) and modified since early Christian times by ecclesiastical synods.¹¹⁰ There is very little pretense, in other words, that Anglo-Saxon law, especially from Alfred forward, was anything less than divine law mediated through king and clergy. While Anglo-Saxon law would not reach its full rhetorical potential until the early eleventh century, when Wulfstan apparently dominated the *witan*, earlier codes reveal its potential to bring royal authority to bear on the moral and spiritual lives of the kingdom's inhabitants. Thus Alfred's code doubles the fines for stealing on Sundays and during the seasons of Christmas, Easter, Rogationtide and Lent.¹¹¹ For his part, Æthelstan punishes the swearing of false oaths with burial in unconsecrated ground and the transaction of business on Sundays with a fine of 30s as well as confiscation of the goods in question.¹¹² Half a century later, Edgar's third code effectively made the bishop the king's second-in-command in the diocese when it gave him, and not the ealdorman or royal reeve, responsibility for collecting the king's compensation for a judge accused of giving false judgment.¹¹³ Even though Patrick Wormald was right to wonder if the impact of written law was more theoretical than practical in the early Middle Ages, the ideology it promoted of an integrated polity, secular and ecclesiastical, would still have had made a significant impression on the hearts and minds of those subject to it.¹¹⁴

By the end of the first millennium, then, the law-codes drafted by English bishops reflected the full potential of consecrated kingship: a man "elected" by the *witan* (but really chosen by God), "ordained" in priestly fashion, perpetually surrounded by ecclesiastical advisors, and increasingly pictured in direct relationship with Christ. In all of these respects Edgar was the model Christian king, but as noted above, eleventh-century kings did not always live up to his image. Little could be done about King Æthelred once he was consecrated, but if law-making was about image as well as practice, then Wulfstan could use the law-code as well as the sermon to effect a change in English attitudes toward the king, to wipe the slate clean, as it were, after it had become clear that Æthelred had recommitted himself to his consecration promises. Thus, after four shorter codes had already been issued, a lengthy law-code was promulgated in 1008, at the heart of which lay some very basic social and ecclesiastical principles. Two versions, V and VI

¹⁰⁸ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 299.

¹⁰⁹ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 310, 319.

¹¹⁰ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 418. Cf. Frantzen, *King Alfred*, 13–16.

¹¹¹ Alfred 5 §5.

¹¹² II Æthelstan 26 and 24 §1, respectively.

¹¹³ III Edgar 3.

¹¹⁴ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 431.

Æthelred, are extant, and while their relationship to one another is still debated,¹¹⁵ their intention is clear: the reestablishment of fundamental social and ecclesiastical norms that had apparently fallen by the wayside. King and people are exhorted, so that “forthwith God will have mercy upon this nation,” to “readily submit, in matters both religious and secular, to the duty which befits them,” to avoid illicit unions, to render their tithes and dues, to observe Sunday and feast day fasts, to get the ships fitted out so that they are ready by Easter and otherwise attend to military matters diligently, and to not condemn criminals to death too lightly, to name but a few.¹¹⁶ Two further sections of the code setting out punishment for desertion from the king’s personal army and plotting against him give some sense of the political instability of the period, while references to false weights and measures and calls for improvement in the coinage imply concomitant economic problems.¹¹⁷

The circumstances surrounding the promulgation of this code reveal the extent to which Wulfstan, and undoubtedly many other members in the *witan*, lay as well as ecclesiastical, understood this to be a pivotal moment in the king’s reign.¹¹⁸ The council met during Pentecost, 1008, the time in the liturgical year that commemorates, among other things, the preaching of the Apostles to the multitude.¹¹⁹ At about the same time, Æthelred issued the *Agnus Dei* penny, upon which the royal portrait was replaced by the Lamb of God on one side and a dove on the other, symbols of both peace and the Apocalypse.¹²⁰ Surely it was no coincidence, moreover, that the place-name Enham means “the place where lambs are bred.”¹²¹ A more coherent symbolic gesture, surely orchestrated by Wulfstan and his colleagues to hasten the return of the English to God’s favor, would be difficult to find. In some way related to this event was a penitential edict surviving in both Latin and vernacular copies in the text known as VII Æthelred. The edict, which calls on all adults to fast for three days on bread, water and raw herbs (*herbis crudis*) and confess their sins, implies that Wulfstan, at least, did not place all the blame for the kingdom’s troubles on Æthelred. The Latin version is more laconic than the vernacular version, which states clearly that the edict was being published because of the arrival of the “great army” and that through fasting “as a national penalty” the leaders of the *witan* hoped to “obtain the mercy and

¹¹⁵ Wormald believes that ‘VI’ is an earlier draft of ‘V,’ rather than an adaptation (*Making of English Law*, 333–5 and note 338 for dissenting views). See below, 118.

¹¹⁶ V Æthelred 4, 10, 11, 13–15, 27 and 3, respectively.

¹¹⁷ V Æthelred 28, 30, 24 and 26 §1, respectively.

¹¹⁸ For the events of these years, see A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready: The Ill-Counselled King* (London, 2003).

¹¹⁹ M. Lawson, “Archbishop Wulfstan and the homiletic element in the laws of Æthelred II and Cnut,” in *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. A. Rumble (London, 1994), 575–7. Only three other councils are known to have met at Pentecost from 900–1066 (Wormald, *Making of English Law*, Table 6.2).

¹²⁰ J. J. North, *English Hammered Coinage* (London, 1963; rpt 1980 and 1991), plate XI, no. 4; Lawson, “Archbishop Wulfstan,” 576; Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 330–45. Cf. R. H. M. Dolley, “The nummular brooch from Sulgrave,” in *England Before the Conquest*, 333–49.

¹²¹ Lawson, “Archbishop Wulfstan,” 576. Enham was not the site of any known meeting of the *witan* either before or after 1008 (Wormald, *Making of English Law*, Table 6.2).

compassion of God and through his help withstand our foes.”¹²² The clergy was to do its part by saying daily masses “with special reference to the distress with which we are now afflicted, until an improvement takes place.”

The challenge of Cnut’s kingship was different, though no less serious. As an outsider, and more importantly, a recently converted pagan, Cnut could have been a disaster. As it turned out, however, the king’s willingness to be molded into something more than palatable to the English gave Wulfstan the opportunity to formulate a remarkably comprehensive legal program from the ground up by cobbling together parts of previous law-codes and pieces of his own writings, including *Polity*. Wulfstan’s first legislative efforts on behalf of Cnut resulted from the peace made at Oxford between the English and the Danes in 1018, and represented little more than a restatement of the Enham code.¹²³ A year later, Cnut sent a letter to the people of England from Denmark, announcing his intent to be a good Christian king and reaffirming the principles of English law enshrined in Edgar’s law-code.¹²⁴ That Cnut had more than a passing familiarity with Christianity is emphasized by the letter’s closing exhortations to observe the Sunday fast, honor the saints, and confess one’s sins, “so that we can and may all together through the mercy of the eternal God and the intercession of his saints come to the bliss of the heavenly kingdom and dwell with him, who liveth and reigneth ever without end. Amen.” In Wulfstan’s hands, the former pagan certainly looked much more like Edgar than Æthelred usually did.¹²⁵

The letter, however, was just a preamble, for in 1020, the archbishop compiled his legal masterpiece, I and II Cnut, up to 75 percent of which was based on his earlier writings, law-codes included.¹²⁶ Written late in Wulfstan’s life (d. 1023) and promulgated at the Christmas court in Winchester, it was the fullest expression of his program for a regenerated English people and, at the same time, a means by which the newly-Christianized conqueror could weave his own kingship into the existing legal and ecclesiastical fabric of England. The first part, I Cnut, which is concerned with purely ecclesiastical matters, is remarkably detailed in its protection of the Church’s rights, dues and personnel. It also enjoins its hearers to learn the Pater Noster and the Nicene Creed and to confess their sins regularly.¹²⁷ Despite its deeply ecclesiastical tone and content, I Cnut was nevertheless written from the perspective of the king, and it ends with the exhortation to heed the words of the bishops and priests who, as God’s heralds and teachers, guard the people against the works of the devil.

II Cnut is the secular counterpart of I Cnut, and, more than anything else, a witness to Wulfstan’s profound understanding of legal custom and culture. Its

¹²² The fast was to take place on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Michaelmas, which apparently dates it to 1009 (Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 331 and note 314).

¹²³ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 346.

¹²⁴ C&S, no. 60. Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 347–8.

¹²⁵ The association with Wulfstan is more than just the date. According to the text’s editors, the letter follows three short sermons of Wulfstan (Napier LIX, LX and LXI), sermons that have been annotated by Wulfstan himself, in the York Gospels (C&S, 435; Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 347).

¹²⁶ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 355 and Table 5.4.

¹²⁷ I Cnut 22.

remarkable level of detail shows Wulfstan at his intellectual best. Although much of it was based on earlier law codes and other sources, new concepts such as an awareness of motive and extenuating circumstance led Patrick Wormald to conclude that “the Winchester code does deserve to rank among the most sophisticated legislative statements of post-Roman Europe.”¹²⁸ Cnut’s interest in the law as a means of communicating with his subjects outlived Wulfstan. The king’s letter of 1027 was obviously not written by Wulfstan, who had died several years earlier, but by someone in his circle, perhaps Abbot Lyfing of Tavistock, future bishop of Crediton and then Worcester. Like Cnut’s first encyclical, it is addressed to the English people, beginning with the bishops, and it speaks, in the first person, of a journey Cnut made abroad for the coronation of Conrad II that included attendance at a papal synod.¹²⁹ The letter also details the gifts he received, the great respect he was accorded, and the financial concessions he elicited from the pope relative to the retrieval of archiepiscopal *pallia*, ending with his promise to rule justly in thanksgiving to God for his many blessings. We shall never know what Cnut really thought of these documents issued in his name, but in terms of the image they promoted it is fair to say that Cnut’s bishops had risen to the challenge of making a pagan conqueror a worthy successor to Edgar.

Few events in the life of the *witan* reflected the intersection of the political and the pastoral like royal consecration and the promulgation of law, and if we know more about these activities than most conciliar activities, it is only because they resulted in the production of texts that still survive. But the lay and ecclesiastical members of the *witan* met regularly to discuss all manner of secular and ecclesiastical business, from war preparations and diplomatic missions to attendance at imperial weddings and papal synods. The bishops must have met alone for part of the time, as the lay magnates presumably did, but it is not clear from the evidence how the *witenagemot* actually functioned. Contemporary narrative sources such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* usually only report in terse fashion, if they report anything at all, where a great meeting had taken place, and little else. In only two instances are more interesting details available. The entry for 977 records that “all the chief councillors of the English people fell from an upper storey at Calne, except that Archbishop Dunstan alone remained standing upon a beam; and some were very severely injured there, and some did not survive it.”¹³⁰ The choice of meeting rooms in this instance was clearly unsuitable for the number of councillors, some of who paid the ultimate price. A seemingly random (in the sense that it does not exactly belong where it was recorded) notation in a late tenth-century Durham liturgical book expands our understanding of the logistics involved in gathering so many notables in once place; it records that the bishop had to camp in a tent on the outskirts of a royal vill in order to attend the *witenagemot*.¹³¹

All that can be deduced from these stray references is that such grand meetings

¹²⁸ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 365.

¹²⁹ C&S, no. 65. Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 348–9.

¹³⁰ ASC, s.a. 978 [recte 977] (DE).

¹³¹ *The Durham Ritual*, ed. T. J. Brown (Copenhagen, 1969), 23–4, in Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 437.

strained the resources of hosts and attendees alike. We can also reasonably infer that the meetings were saturated with religiosity. Although the king's council certainly met on an *ad hoc* basis, meetings appear to have been regularly scheduled during one or more of the great liturgical feasts of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.¹³² Whenever several dozen or more bishops and abbots, and who knows how many more priests and monks, gathered in one place, particularly during such holy times in the Church's calendar, one could expect awe-inspiring liturgical celebration. It is also possible that the already religiously charged atmosphere was enhanced on occasion with festal crown-wearings, although the evidence for the liturgical renewal of royal consecration in the Anglo-Saxon period is purely speculative.¹³³ In any event, sermons delivered before the *witan* reinforced the divine nature of royal authority, and the obligations of its members, lay and ecclesiastical, to provide good counsel. Ælfric, who occasionally attended the *witenagemot*, probably wrote his sermon for the Sunday after the Ascension with just this group in mind. It was at this point in the Gospel, after all, that the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles to give them the wisdom to preach the Word of God, a particularly useful analogy for this setting.¹³⁴ The bishops would have done their best to move the hearts of their secular counterparts with words, but they would also have employed music, candles, prayers, vestments and other elements that made the early medieval liturgy so impressive to its participants. In an age of tactile piety, a message delivered in such a theatrical manner would not soon be forgotten. And it was surely the purpose, from the Church's point of view, of meeting on a regular basis: to remind those charged with maintaining a society that would be pleasing to God exactly what that meant, in the event that time, distance and the cares of the world made that image less clear in their minds. From the Church's perspective, then, the *witenagemot* was as much an opportunity for spiritual renewal for all those in attendance, as a venue for the conduct of ecclesiastical, political and military business.

While the precise nature of the later Anglo-Saxon *witenagemot* cannot be teased out of the extant evidence, it is possible to know something about episcopal attendance from the witness lists of charters. Analyzing witness lists is an admittedly tricky business, particularly using them to estimate status within the *witan*, since most charters survive only in cartulary copies subject to a variety of scribal manipulations.¹³⁵ But it is reasonable to assume that acceptable charters featuring large numbers of ecclesiastical and lay witnesses emanated from major gatherings of the *witan*. Even a cursory glance at Simon Keynes's *Atlas of Attestations* shows that bishops in numbers ranging from nine to nineteen regularly attended the *witenagemot* in the tenth and eleventh centuries.¹³⁶ Likewise,

¹³² Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 445 and Table 6.2.

¹³³ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 448.

¹³⁴ P. Stafford, "Church and society in the age of Ælfric," in *Old English Homily*, ed. Szarmach and Huppé, 29. For Wulfstan sermons possibly written for delivery to the *witan*, see Napier, 50 and 51.

¹³⁵ S. Keynes, *The Diplomas of King Æthelred 'the Unready,' 978–1016* (Cambridge, 1980), 130–4 and 154–62.

¹³⁶ S. Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c. 670–1066* (University of Cambridge, 1993; rev. 1998).

charters that do not feature a full complement of bishops probably do not reflect national meetings, but rather more local meetings of kings, lords and bishops. Three charters of Edward the Confessor produced in 1044 appear to show the royal court on the move. Two produced at (and for) Winchester contain the attestations of the same twelve bishops, suggesting that a reasonably large gathering had taken place. The other, in favor of Exeter, contains only the signatures of the two archbishops, the bishops of Crediton, Winchester, Ramsbury, Wells and Worcester.¹³⁷ What was lost in terms of bishops, however, was made up in the addition of twenty-five thegns. It can reasonably be inferred from these charters that the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Winchester traveled with the king, and were joined in the southwest by the other bishops because they were representing local interests.¹³⁸ Charters cannot tell us, however, why certain bishops were absent from meetings. Geography perhaps accounts for the noticeable absence of bishops of Durham from eleventh century charter witness lists, but it is less clear why Stigand and his successor – his brother, Æthelmær – attest few charters as bishops of Elmham.¹³⁹ Charters, therefore, can take us only so far.¹⁴⁰

Narrative evidence supports the impression given by charters that election to some episcopal sees, such as Canterbury, York and Winchester, imposed on their occupants greater responsibilities in the *witan*. All English bishops were royal bishops, but some were more involved in court life and royal affairs than others. Saints Dunstan and Æthelwold, and to a lesser extent Oswald, were exemplary courtiers in the second half of the tenth century. Dunstan attested charters as an abbot, for example, well before it was common practice for abbots to appear in witness lists.¹⁴¹ He was, according to his hagiographer “B,” King Eadred’s right-hand man and perhaps also his treasurer.¹⁴² William of Malmesbury later elaborated that “the abbot was almost always at his side, and lived in the palace, though all the business of England clamoured for his attention.”¹⁴³ Not to be outdone, Æthelwold was styled King Edgar’s *eximius consiliarius* by John of Worcester.¹⁴⁴ In the early eleventh century, Lyfing, a monk of Winchester, seems to have been a confidant and frequent traveling companion of King Cnut before becoming abbot of Tavistock and bishop of Crediton.¹⁴⁵ He continued to be a courtier, to some degree, under Edward the Confessor, who rewarded him with

¹³⁷ S 1001, 1006 and 1003, respectively. Keynes, *Atlas*, Table LXXV (1).

¹³⁸ T. Oleson, *The Witenagemot in the Reign of Edward the Confessor* (Toronto, 1955), 45.

¹³⁹ Keynes, *Atlas*, Table LXXII.

¹⁴⁰ Witness lists are rare in writs, but see *Writs*, 53, 62, 69, 79 and 112.

¹⁴¹ Dunstan attests S 466 (940) as abbot, although he is the beneficiary. He also attests S 509 (946), Add. (950), and S 582 (955) where he is not the beneficiary.

¹⁴² VSD, 29.

¹⁴³ VSD, ed. Winterbottom and Thomson, i, 22.

¹⁴⁴ JW, s.a. 963.

¹⁴⁵ JW, s.a. 1031. William of Malmesbury says of him: “Livingus, ex monacho Wintoniensi et abbate Tavistokeni, episcopus Cridiensi, maximae familiaritatis et potentiae apud Cnutonem regem habitus est” and “Cum eo Danemarcae multo conversatus tempore, in romano itinere comitatus adhesit” (*GP*, §94). Lyfing received lands in Hampshire and went on to become abbot of Tavistock in 1024 and then bishop of Crediton in 1026.

the see of Worcester, which he held in plurality from 1038 until his death in 1046.¹⁴⁶ If the diplomatic evidence can be trusted, Herman, bishop of Ramsbury, was also a close friend as well as chaplain of King Edward. Elevated to the see in 1045, he witnessed nearly every extant charter of Edward the Confessor, even those to which few bishops attested, and frequently immediately after Stigand, bishop of Winchester and archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁴⁷ Likewise, Edward may have counted Leofric of Exeter among his closest friends. Although English by birth, Leofric had trained in Lotharingia and perhaps accompanied King Edward (along with Herman?) when he returned from exile on the Continent.¹⁴⁸ Little is known about Leofric's career at court, but John of Worcester, for one, considered him the *regis cancellarius*.¹⁴⁹ Edward's high regard for this prelate is further implied by his attendance at Leofric's installation in Exeter, which occurred after the bishop amalgamated the sees of Cornwall and Crediton and moved his diocesan headquarters to the city. According to Exeter's foundation charter, King Edward, Queen Edith, and a host of great men attended the ceremony, the king perhaps taking part in the ceremony.¹⁵⁰ There is no indication that Edward, or indeed any king, regularly attended episcopal installations; he did not, for instance, attend the ceremony one year later that installed another of his Continental companions, the monk Robert Champart, as archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁵¹

It is not surprising to find bishops among the closest of royal confidants; the English Church was, at least in structural terms, remarkably apolitical. There were no episcopal dynasties such that proliferated on the Continent, and a king who planned ahead could, on the basis of episcopal and abbatial appointments, construct an ecclesiastical block of support to counterbalance worrisome surges in comital power.¹⁵² As members of an international institution, however, bishops were also useful in representing royal interests abroad, not just with other clerics but with laymen who might be more inclined to trust men of God before the armed men of enemy kings. Before he became archbishop of Canterbury, for instance, Bishop Oda of Ramsbury was sent by King Athelstan to negotiate the safe return of the king's nephew, Louis d'Outremer, to France.¹⁵³ Later in the tenth century, Bishop Oswald traveled to Germany on some undisclosed diplomatic mission, while Archbishop Sigeric twice negotiated with Viking armies on behalf of King Æthelred, once in 991 and again in 994.¹⁵⁴ Ælfheah, bishop of Winchester, along with Ealdorman Æthelweard, actually conducted Æthelred's booty to Olaf, king

¹⁴⁶ ASC, s.a. 1038 (E).

¹⁴⁷ Keynes, *Atlas*, Table LXXII; ASC, s.a. 1045 (C).

¹⁴⁸ The possibility that Leofric and Herman returned in the household of Edward is based on a spurious charter of Harthcnut (S 993), in which both witnessed as presbyters. See D. W. Blake, "Bishop Leofric," *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* 106 (1974), 48.

¹⁴⁹ JW, s.a. 1046; S 1003.

¹⁵⁰ Edward apparently "led Leofric to the pontifical throne" (S 1021; Blake, "Bishop Leofric," 50).

¹⁵¹ ASC, s.a. 1048 [*recte* 1051] (E) makes it clear that Edward was not present. It reports that after he was installed at Canterbury, Robert went directly to see the king.

¹⁵² Smith, "The preferment of royal clerks," 165–7.

¹⁵³ Richer, *Histoire de France*, ed. R. Latouche, (Paris, 1930–64), I, 130, in Brooks, *Early History*, 222 and 371 n. 47.

¹⁵⁴ VSO, 435–6; ASC, s.a. 991 (CDE) and S 882 and II Æthelred (Keynes, *Diplomas*, 190).

of the Norwegians.¹⁵⁵ It is also possible that Æthelred employed another bishop, Æthelsige of Sherborne, to make peace with Duke Richard at Rouen, although this mission is only recorded in a papal letter reproduced by William of Malmesbury.¹⁵⁶ Finally, in Edward the Confessor's reign, two bishops, Cynsige of York and Æthelwine of Durham, had the honor of conducting King Malcolm of Norway to King Edward in 1059.¹⁵⁷ The latter continued as royal ambassador to the court of Malcolm III under William the Conqueror.¹⁵⁸

It was also apparently common practice for Anglo-Saxon kings to entrust members of their family to bishops when traveling abroad. In 929 Bishop Cenwald of Worcester was sent to Germany, perhaps to escort the king's two half-sisters, who were potential brides for Otto, the son of Henry the Fowler.¹⁵⁹ Likewise, Bishop Brihteah of Worcester accompanied Cnut's daughter, Gunhild, to Germany for her wedding, presumably in 1035.¹⁶⁰ Finally, Ælfhun bishop of London was charged with the care of the princes Edward and Alfred when they fled to Normandy in 1013.¹⁶¹ The sources typically only allow fleeting glimpses into the international world of English bishops; there must have been many more occasions in which they acted on behalf on kings, especially in the course of trips abroad to collect *pallia* from Rome, attend synods, and undertake pilgrimages.

Life at court was clearly not without its dangers, however, as Abbot Dunstan and his kinsman, Bishop Cynsige, discovered the hard way. King Eadwig apparently took exception to being dragged by the pair from the arms of his mistress and ordered to return to his coronation feast. The king was reportedly so enraged that Dunstan was forced into exile on the Continent, while Cynsige appears to have been banned from the *witan* for the better part of a year.¹⁶² Several decades later, the animosity between King Æthelred and Bishop Ælfstan of Rochester not only resulted in the disappearance of the bishop from the *witan* for four years, but also the spoliation of Rochester's endowment.¹⁶³ King Cnut made similar moves against the see of London, perhaps because Bishop Ælfwig participated in the council that elected Edmund king. The evidence is oblique, but damning: Ælfwig appears on only three charters, the king dispossessed the see of the valuable estate of Southminster, and the community lost their claim to the body of St Ælfheah, whose translation to Canterbury Cnut approved.¹⁶⁴

Brief though it was, Harthacnut's reign also seems to have caused discomfort for several bishops. This was a strange affair to say the least. The king deposed

¹⁵⁵ They gave over English hostages, and then conducted the Norwegian king to the royal vill of Andover, "where the king received him graciously, caused him to be confirmed by the bishop, and adopted him for his son" (JW and Symeon, s.a. 994; ASC, s.a. 994 (CDEF)).

¹⁵⁶ GR, §166.

¹⁵⁷ Symeon, s.a. 1059.

¹⁵⁸ OV, 218–19.

¹⁵⁹ S. Keynes, "King Æthelred's books," in *Literature and Learning*, appendix.

¹⁶⁰ Hemming, i, 267.

¹⁶¹ ASC, s.a. 1013 (E) and JW, s.a. 1013.

¹⁶² VSD, 29; Keynes, *Diplomas*, 49.

¹⁶³ Keynes, *Diplomas*, 178.

¹⁶⁴ Whitelock, *Some Anglo-Saxon Bishops of London*, 3–34.

Lyfing, bishop of Worcester, in 1040 because he believed him to be involved in his brother's murder, but Lyfing and the king apparently made peace, because he was restored to his see a year later.¹⁶⁵ In the interim, however, the bishopric was given to Archbishop Ælfric of York, one of Lyfing's chief accusers, who, narrative sources further record, was sent by Harthacnut, with others, to dig up the body of the king's brother and unceremoniously toss the head into the River Thames. If this set of circumstances were not bizarre enough, William of Malmesbury believed Ælfric actually encouraged the king's raid on Worcester while it was under his care; John of Worcester merely acknowledges that he was still bishop when the raid took place.¹⁶⁶ If he was involved in the post-mortem decapitation, it does seem that Ælfric, the monk and reformer of communal life in his diocese, was stretching the limits of propriety, even by eleventh-century standards. But things are rarely as straightforward as they seem. The career of Wulfstan I of York, whose apparent sympathy with the Danes helped establish a short-lived, independent Danish kingdom in Northumbria in the mid tenth century, is a stark reminder that personal and regional loyalties could be quite strong, even within the episcopate.¹⁶⁷

The careers of the two pre-Conquest archbishops, Stigand and Ealdred, deserve closer attention because they highlight the insecurity of the Church's position in the world, regardless of the mandate it possessed. The former was a secular priest and the latter a monk; both, however, were active courtiers. Like Lyfing before him, Ealdred had been a Winchester monk before he was promoted to the abbacy of Tavistock. He received the bishopric of Worcester in 1046, where he remained until his appointment to the archbishopric of York in 1060.¹⁶⁸ Throughout these years Ealdred, whom Barlow has called "the closest thing to a 'prince-bishop' that England could produce," spent a great deal of his time either at court or abroad.¹⁶⁹ He went to Rome in 1050 with Herman of Ramsbury to attend a synod and to conduct some business for the king.¹⁷⁰ He then spent the entire year 1054 at the imperial court of Germany for the purpose of convincing the emperor to send an embassy to Hungary to bring back Edward, the son of Edmund Ironside.¹⁷¹ Two years later, Ealdred accompanied Bishop Leofric and Earl Harold on a mission to negotiate a reconciliation between King Edward and Gruffydd, king of the Welsh.¹⁷² Finally, Ealdred went to Rome again in 1061, ostensibly to collect his *pallium*, but the fact that his companions were Earl Tostig

¹⁶⁵ JW and Symeon, s.a. 1040.

¹⁶⁶ GP, §115; GR, §188. J. M. Cooper, *The Last Four Anglo-Saxon Archbishops of York*, Borthwick Papers 38 (York, 1970), 14–15; Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, 57–8.

¹⁶⁷ For the events, see D. Whitelock, "The dealings of the kings of England with Northumbria in the tenth and eleventh centuries," in *The Anglo-Saxons: Studies Presented to Bruce Dickins*, ed. P. Clemoes (London, 1959), 70–85.

¹⁶⁸ For Ealdred's career, see King, "Ealdred, archbishop of York," 123–37 and Cooper, *Last Four Anglo-Saxon Archbishops of York*.

¹⁶⁹ Barlow, *English Church I*, 86.

¹⁷⁰ ASC, s.a. 1049 (C) [*recte* 1050]. ASC, s.a. 1051 (D) and 1047 (E) [*recte* 1050] report only that they attended the synod.

¹⁷¹ ASC, s.a. 1054 (CD); JW and Symeon, s.a. 1054.

¹⁷² Symeon, s.a. 1056.

and a large lay retinue suggests that there was royal as well as ecclesiastical business on his agenda.¹⁷³ Although we know nothing about Ealdred as a person, and very little about him as a pastor, he was clearly a trusted royal servant in the later years of Edward the Confessor's reign.

Although he does not appear to have represented English interests abroad, Archbishop Stigand was another of the chief political players of the middle decades of the eleventh century. Identified by the Canterbury version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as the Confessor's advisor and chaplain, Stigand rose through the ranks from his first appointment as priest to Cnut's victory church at *Assandun* to assume the three episcopal sees of Elmham, Winchester and Canterbury.¹⁷⁴ The last two he held in plurality from 1052 until he was deposed by the Conqueror in 1070. Over the course of his career, Stigand amassed a large fortune and played a central role in all of the major political events of the pre-Conquest period.¹⁷⁵ He was vilified by post-Conquest writers, primarily for his worldliness, yet more than a few monastic houses, including Old Minster, Winchester, Ely and Bury St Edmunds, considered him a generous patron.¹⁷⁶ It also now appears that Stigand spent some time abroad, where sources report he gave lavish gifts to the communities he visited.¹⁷⁷

The conflicts between the family of Earl Godwine and King Edward surely pressed the diplomatic skills of both Ealdred and Stigand. Ealdred was particularly involved with the comital family, an association that might have hindered his promotion for a time. He had been sent by King Edward to retrieve Swein Godwineson, who had escaped to Flanders after he slew his cousin Beorn, a mission which must have put a strain on all concerned.¹⁷⁸ Shortly thereafter the king ordered Ealdred to intercept Earl Harold and Leofwine, who had escaped to Bristol while the family was in exile. According to the Worcester version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Ealdred and his troops either could not or would not capture them.¹⁷⁹ Ealdred's seemingly lukewarm reaction to the king's command in this particular conflict may account for the fact that Stigand emerged as the mediator between the two factions, royal and comital.¹⁸⁰ It perhaps also explains why Ealdred was passed over in favor of the king's priest, Cynsige, for the archbishopric of York when it first became vacant in 1051. It was only a matter of time before Ealdred did become archbishop of York, in 1061, but his long-time association with the family of Earl Godwine may have delayed his promotion by a full decade. This is, of course, conjecture, but it is interesting that the family's

¹⁷³ Symeon, s.a. 1061; *VÆR*, 52–6; *ASC*, s.a. 1060 (D).

¹⁷⁴ 1043, 1047 and 1052, respectively.

¹⁷⁵ Smith, "Archbishop Stigand," 204–13.

¹⁷⁶ Smith, "Archbishop Stigand," 213.

¹⁷⁷ *Vita Willibrordi*, ed. Albert Poncelet, *AASS*, November 4 (1916), c. 29. Many thanks to M. C. Ferrari for bringing this to my attention.

¹⁷⁸ JW and Symeon, s.a. 1049.

¹⁷⁹ The D version of the *ASC* is typically cautious with respect to Ealdred (*ASC*, s.a. 1052 (D) [*recte* 1051]).

¹⁸⁰ The *ASC* records that Stigand "intervened with God's help . . . and advised that hostages should be given as surety on either side and so it was done" (*ASC*, s.a. 1051 (EF)).

reinstatement the next year coincided with the resumption of Ealdred's preferment.¹⁸¹ Even so, when Harold went to York to try and reestablish peace after his brother Tostig's harsh rule had ended in open rebellion, he took Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, with him instead of Ealdred, ostensibly because "the report of his (Wulfstan's) holiness had reached even the most remote peoples."¹⁸² Harold may very well have enjoyed Wulfstan's company, but he must also have realized that Ealdred's association with Tostig's rule would not help his cause.

Despite his eventual meteoric rise, Stigand's career, like Ealdred's, almost stalled in its tracks when he was implicated in a plot with the king's mother in 1043 to keep Edward from the royal treasury. He was, in fact, briefly removed from the bishopric of Elmham.¹⁸³ Although he was reinstated, and went on to become bishop of Winchester and archbishop of Canterbury under Edward, it is possible that Stigand's primary allegiance lay with the king's mother, whose advisor he may have been and to whom he probably owed his early preferment.¹⁸⁴ Having perhaps learned a valuable lesson about the importance of appearing neutral, Stigand emerged as mediator in the most important political event of Edward's reign, the rebellion of the Godwinesons in 1050. According to Edward's encomiast, Stigand was sent to give Earl Godwine the news that the king had denied his request for safe conduct and hostages if he were to appear at court. Saddened by the impasse, Stigand reportedly wept.¹⁸⁵ Two years later the future archbishop again played mediator, reconciling the two parties after Godwine's threat of military action forced Edward to come back to the table.¹⁸⁶ It was the apparent victory of Earl Godwine that precipitated the flight of the Norman archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Champart, Ulf, the ill-suited bishop of Dorchester, and William, bishop of London. Although William soon returned, Robert and Ulf remained abroad, paving the way for Stigand's appointment to the archbishopric in 1052.¹⁸⁷ Although Stigand was by no means the only available nominee, it seems likely that at this point a candidate would have to have been palatable to both the royal and comital factions. Stigand does not appear to have taken sides in the rebellion, and therefore fits this particular aspect of the job description. Despite his uncanonical position, he seems to have been an acceptable archbishop, lasting four years into the Conqueror's reign before he and a handful of other English prelates were deposed in 1070.

¹⁸¹ Ealdred went on to become interim bishop of the sees of Hereford and Ramsbury and abbot of Winchcombe, all before he was promoted to the archiepiscopal see.

¹⁸² VSW, i, §16.

¹⁸³ ASC, s.a. 1043 (C), 1042 (E) [*recte* 1043]. Smith, "Archbishop Stigand," 200–1 and F. Barlow, "Two notes: Cnut's second pilgrimage and Emma's disgrace in 1043," *EHR* 73 (1958), 649–56.

¹⁸⁴ ASC, s.a. 1043 (C) is the only source to record Stigand as Emma's advisor. It is suspect, however, because the context is incriminatory and this version is generally hostile to Stigand. Was it only a coincidence that Emma retired to Winchester shortly after these events, and that Stigand was elevated to this see shortly after that?

¹⁸⁵ *VÆR*, 34–6.

¹⁸⁶ ASC, s.a. 1052 (E) and s.a. 1051 (F) [*recte* 1052].

¹⁸⁷ ASC, s.a. 1053 (C) [*recte* 1052], 1052 (E) and 1051 (F) [*recte* 1052].

Bishops and War

This chapter concludes with a brief look at the evidence for episcopal participation in warfare, what might be considered the ultimate secular activity. As landholders of extraordinary standing, bishops were responsible for contributing to the defense of the kingdom. As leaders of the *witan*, though, some Anglo-Saxon bishops participated more directly in the warrior culture in which they were so often immersed. Consider, for example, the issue of heriot, the death-duty owed to lords by their retainers, which churchmen had not been required by law to provide for several centuries. By all accounts, the practice of bishops bequeathing it to kings died hard. In the mid tenth century, Bishop Theodred of London left the king a heriot of two hundred marks of red gold, two silver cups, four of his best horses, two of his best swords, four shields and four spears, in addition to three estates.¹⁸⁸ Bishop Æthelwold railed against it in the *Regularis concordia*, yet half century later, Bishop Ælfwold of Crediton bequeathed four horses, four shields and spears, two helmets and coats of mail, fifty mancuses of gold, and a sixty-four oared ship.¹⁸⁹ About the ship, the will notes that “it is quite complete, save alone that he would have fully equipped it in a fitting manner for his lord, had God granted it.”¹⁹⁰ The bequest of heriot may indicate a more personal relationship between a bishop and a king, but because it is not clear from the evidence how common it was, this remains an open question. In terms of the military preparedness of some bishops, it is possible that the military gear described in these sources was purchased expressly for the purpose of providing heriot, a gesture of sorts, or that episcopal possession of such gear was largely symbolic.¹⁹¹ If nothing else, it cautions against taking the prescriptive evidence against episcopal participation in warfare too literally.

Occasionally, bishops did more than just provide heriot to their royal lords. When King Æthelred commanded a fleet of ships be assembled at London, for instance, he put it under the command of Ælfgar, bishop of Ramsbury, and Æscwig, bishop of Dorchester, in addition to two ealdormen, with orders to trap the Danish army in some port and keep them there.¹⁹² Although it does not sound like it, theirs may have been moral support rather than actual command, as in the case of Eadnoth bishop of Dorchester, who died in 1016 after he had “come to offer up prayers to God for the soldiers while they were fighting.”¹⁹³ Decades

¹⁸⁸ *Wills*, no. 1.

¹⁸⁹ *RC*, c. 69, in M. Gretsch, “The Benedictine Rule in Old English: a document of Bishop Æthelwold’s reform politics,” in *Words, Texts and Manuscripts*, 135; *Crawford Collection*, no. 10. The charter’s editors note that “Ælfwold’s heriot corresponds almost exactly to that fixed in Cnut’s laws for a king’s thegn” (*Crawford Collection*, 127).

¹⁹⁰ *Crawford Collection*, 126.

¹⁹¹ Some traffic in war implements, especially things like swords, may have been as much for their symbolism and value as their utility. The eleventh-century will of Ætheling Æthelstan to Old Minster Winchester bequeaths a sword with a silver hilt, a gold belt and armlet and a drinking horn which he bought from them (*Wills*, no. 20).

¹⁹² *JW*, s.a. 992. See also V Æthelred 27.

¹⁹³ *JW* and Symeon, s.a. 1016.

later, Bishop Ealdred and some men of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire were almost killed by a combined invasion force of the Welsh and Irish in 1050.¹⁹⁴ And, of course, Bishop Leofgar was killed in 1056 by the Welsh.¹⁹⁵ Assuming, as their detractors did, that these men were necessarily less holy than their peers, is not justified, as a brief discussion of Bishop Wulfstan II's activities makes clear. By all accounts, Wulfstan was an extraordinarily pious man, one of the few universally admired pre-Conquest bishops, yet when his city was under attack after the Conquest, Wulfstan and his community took a commanding role in its defense. Symeon of Durham records that in 1074 "Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, with a large military force, and Æthelwine, abbot of Evesham, with his men . . . prevented the earl of Hereford from crossing the Severn."¹⁹⁶ Likewise, in 1088, "the nobles of Herefordshire and Shropshire, accompanied by a multitude of the Welsh, marched to Worcester, where they thought to take the church and castle, the latter of which was at that time under the charge of the venerable bishop Wulfstan . . . meanwhile the episcopal household was courageously preparing for the contest."¹⁹⁷ It is worth noting that he was defending his city from the army of another bishop, the Norman Odo of Bayeux.

We are left, then, with the sense that military service was to be avoided if possible, but that in the early Middle Ages, defending one's flock from harm could be a temporal as well as spiritual responsibility. Doubtless Worcester's clergy would have preferred to wield crosses rather than swords; they chose to fight, however, rather than to abandon their Church. An image in an early eleventh-century *herbarium* suggests a similarly greater contemporary ambiguity toward military service than narrative sources imply. The miniature depicts an ecclesiastic transfixing a lion with a spear (perhaps a bishop wielding a crosier), while a soldier and a monk look on.¹⁹⁸ Although the manuscript's provenance is unknown, it is tempting to think that it was made for an English bishop like Ealdred or Wulfstan. Likewise, an early eleventh-century compendium of texts ranging from the Old English Bede, homilies and medical recipes contains a charm invoking the aid of the evangelists: "Matthew be my helmet, Mark my mail-coat, shining, protector of life, Luke, my sword, sharp and bright-edged, John, my shield, brightened with glory."¹⁹⁹ The manuscript was at Exeter by the third quarter of the eleventh century, as it bears Bishop Leofric of Exeter's donation inscription.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁴ JW, s.a. 1049; ASC, s.a. 1050 (D) [*recte* 1049].

¹⁹⁵ ASC, s.a. 1056 (CD).

¹⁹⁶ Symeon, s.a. 1074.

¹⁹⁷ JW, s.a. 1088.

¹⁹⁸ G 402, f. 11v (E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: 900–1066* (London, 1976), no. 63).

¹⁹⁹ Cockayne, *Leechdoms*, I, 390, in Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 152.

²⁰⁰ P. W. Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter* (Woodbridge, 1993), 3. Monks as God's warriors is a fairly conventional *topos* of hagiography. Thus Goscelin's *Life of St Wulfsig* describes the bishop as having "put on the armour of God, equipped with the breastplate of faith and the helmet of salvation" ("The Life of St Wulfsig of Sherborne by Goscelin of Saint-Bertin: a new translation with introduction, appendix and notes," trans. R. Love, in *St Wulfsig and Sherborne. Essays to Celebrate the Millennium of the Benedictine Abbey 998–1998*, ed. K. Barker, D. Hinton, and A. Hunt (Oxford, 2005), §II).

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This chapter both begins and ends with a discussion of episcopal participation in warfare, an activity perhaps more controversial in the texts than in real life, and it considers along the way a broad range of powers that bishops enjoyed in the royal arena. These powers, I have argued, devolved from a worldview that made no distinction between the sacred and the secular. Bishops were royal servants, to be sure, but their service was, in theory, as much pastoral as personal. It is therefore anachronistic to speak of secular and sacred activities as though they were in any way incompatible. Law-codes are a prime example of the conflation of the sacred and the secular. On the face of it, the promulgation of law was a royal right and responsibility, but because the Church had a vested interest in framing both sacral kingship and notions of justice, it was a pastoral responsibility of the highest order. What is more, it was the best way to protect ecclesiastical income and property. While certain behavior, such as the participation of bishops in war, does seem to have evoked disapproval, most commentators cautioned only against undertaking royal service without the necessary spirit of detachment. It was not, in other words, the nature of the service that endangered the soul of the bishop, but the lack of moderation or humility with which he approached it. The remaining chapters consider the diocesan responsibilities of Anglo-Saxon bishops, which entailed an equally complex blending of the pastoral with the political. And because bishops were major landholders as well as diocesans, the social and economic dimensions to their power were even greater in this sphere.

3

Cathedral Culture

WHEN the great meetings of the *witan* were over, most Anglo-Saxon bishops returned to cathedral communities and dioceses that were more diverse than they were similar. At this level, the Church was little more than a network of relationships, not an institution in the modern sense, and ecclesiastical response to the often awesome uncertainties of the period depended as much on the abilities of individual bishops as it did on the institutional framework of the Church. Lack of uniformity on many levels underscores the Anglo-Saxon Church's decentralized character. Despite the unity of purpose and vision reflected in the prescriptive literature, bishops were more or less on their own in their dioceses. Beyond the provision of texts and the reinforcement of expectations at synods, there were as yet no mechanisms for assuring uniformity across the kingdom. Cathedral churches, too, must have been idiosyncratic in a variety of ways, from the number of priests who served them and the type of lifestyle they practiced to the nature of their interaction with their episcopal leaders and other priests in their dioceses. Most of these issues cannot be addressed in their entirety even for the larger sees like Canterbury, Winchester and Worcester, which have relatively substantial archives. Few, if any, of the surviving sources were created for the purpose of illuminating cathedral culture in late Anglo-Saxon England, although some information can be gleaned from anecdotal narrative, liturgical, canonical, homiletic and legal evidence.

The discussion can be broadened, however, by a consideration of the thousand or so extant Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, many of which were produced by and for episcopal communities. Like the prescriptive material in homilies and synodical documents, they cannot necessarily get us closer to actual practice. It is still difficult, for instance, despite much recent scholarly attention, to ascertain where many manuscripts were both written and used.¹ At the same time, it would be imprudent to argue that the mere possession of manuscripts necessarily implies that a community subscribed to their contents. It is always possible that books sat on shelves unused, although given the cost of preparing them, this seems unlikely to have been a common practice. Obviously, the corpus of manuscripts can only

¹ Of the more than 1,000 manuscripts in England before 1100 catalogued by Helmut Gneuss, only about 70 percent can be localized. About half of these come from Canterbury, Durham, Exeter, Salisbury and Worcester, another 25 percent from St Augustine's and Bury St Edmunds, and about 10 percent from Winchester's three houses. Salisbury's scriptorium is post-Conquest, but the overall picture is similar (H. Gneuss, "Anglo-Saxon libraries from the conversion to the Benedictine reform," in his *Books and Libraries in Early England* (Aldershot, 1996), 646–7).

be exploited in the most general of ways, but few would deny that books, both individually and collectively, open a window onto contemporary mentalities. They certainly have been studied to great profit by scholars interested in post-Conquest changes in intellectual tastes.² As a barometer of the interests – liturgical, devotional, intellectual, literary and canonical – of the men and women who both wrote and commissioned texts in the tenth and eleventh centuries, they are singularly invaluable. This chapter thus utilizes this evidence, together with synodical, narrative and documentary sources, to elucidate aspects of cathedral life and culture. The reader will quickly come to realize that a great deal of speculation pertains to any attempt to illuminate cathedral culture across the board in this period, and not just at the relatively well-documented communities of Canterbury and Winchester. The picture presented here is also a great deal more static than it would otherwise be if our evidence were not so patchy and exiguous; what we have, more often than not, are snapshots rather than moving pictures. As a result, a sense of change over time will often be difficult to perceive. This having been said, the evidence does tell us something about liturgical life in late Anglo-Saxon cathedrals, particularly secular cathedrals.

Living by the Rules

As the previous chapter observed, the degree to which reformed monasticism came to influence episcopal life and culture, beginning in the second half of the tenth century, was unprecedented in the western Church. Even so, most English cathedrals were staffed by clerks, even if their bishops were monks. Only four – Winchester, Canterbury, Sherborne and Worcester – were converted into monastic communities in the wake of reform.³ There is no evidence that a complete conversion of all of the kingdom's sees was ever planned and even these four communities were probably a great deal more mixed than reform literature suggests. As John Blair notes, "the distinctly low-key and hesitant drift of the Canterbury cathedral community towards reformed monasticism during Dunstan's pontificate carries its own message."⁴ Likewise, the jury is still out as to whether Oswald reformed Worcester or if this was only undertaken in the early eleventh century. At the very least, his approach was far less heavy-handed than Æthelwold's: rather than expelling the clerks, he built a separate church for the monks alongside the cathedral church.⁵ As liturgical and pastoral communities,

² See, for example, T. Webber, *Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral: c. 1075–c. 1125* (Oxford, 1992) and, more generally, R. Gameson, *The Manuscripts of Early Norman England (c. 1066–1130)* (Oxford, 1999).

³ For Sherborne, see S. Keynes, "Wulfsgie, monk of Glastonbury, abbot of Westminster (c. 900–3), and bishop of Sherborne (c. 993–1002), in *St Wulfsgie and Sherborne*, 62–72.

⁴ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 352; Brooks, *Early History*, 256; Thacker, "Cults at Canterbury," 221–45.

⁵ For the arguments for and against, see E. John, "The church of Worcester and St Oswald," in *Belief and Culture*, 142–57 and J. Barrow, "How the twelfth-century monks at Worcester perceived their past," in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. P. Magdalino (London, 1992), 53–74.

monastic cathedrals obviously needed priests and it is clear that a number of the monks in these communities were priests in their own right.⁶ In any case, all cathedrals were, in theory, liturgical communities as well as diocesan administrative centers, and by the late tenth century, all who served these cathedrals, whether monks or canons, were supposed to live under a rule that regulated most every aspect of their daily lives. Reliable evidence that uniform standards of liturgical life were being observed across the kingdom, particularly in the secular cathedrals and throughout the entire period in question, is elusive. Yet scattered evidence suggests it is worth revisiting the question, particularly for the eleventh century.

The prescriptive evidence seems clear enough. Wulfstan's law-codes, V and VI Æthelred and I Cnut, enjoin all of God's servants, secular as well as monastic, to live under their rule (*regollic libban*), and while there was probably a great deal of diversity in observance, there were few options in terms of the rules themselves.⁷ Monks after the tenth-century reform period followed the *Regularis concordia*, the Anglicized *Rule* of St Benedict, while canons most likely followed the enlarged *Regula canonorum* (hereafter *OEERC*), a combination of the rule written for his canons by Chrodegang, the eighth-century bishop of Metz, and the ninth-century *Rule of Aachen*.⁸ The terminology was of course different – bishops, deacons and canons rather than abbots, priors and monks – but the lifestyle that Chrodegang's *Rule* prescribed was strikingly similar to that prescribed in Benedict's *Rule*; the only substantive difference had to do with the possession of property, which Benedict prohibited and Chrodegang allowed.⁹

Since the twelfth century it has generally been assumed that all late Anglo-Saxon monastic communities followed their rule. It is safe to say, however, that few, if any, historians have been as optimistic about the secular clergy. Julia Barrow commented in 1994 that "an ordered life for secular canons . . . had almost no impact during the period c. 900–1050."¹⁰ She may, of course, be right. Much of the case for the observance of the communal life at English cathedrals (and minster churches) is either circumstantial or subject to varying interpretation. Manuscript evidence for Anglo-Saxon interest in the *OEERC* is indeed slim: only four whole or fragmentary copies survive from the pre-Conquest period. Only one pre-dates the mid eleventh century, and it cannot be attributed any more securely than to a community somewhere in southern England or Mercia.¹¹ Two of the remaining texts are related to one other; one is a single-chapter excerpt, presumably taken from a whole copy of the text, and both were produced at Exeter in the time of Bishop Leofric.¹² The last, a fragment, was

⁶ Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 203.

⁷ V Æthelred 7; VI Æthelred 2; I Cnut 5.

⁸ J. S. Barrow, "English cathedral communities and reform in the late tenth and eleventh centuries," in *Anglo-Norman Durham 1093–1193*, ed. D. Rollason, M. Harvey and M. Prestwich (Woodbridge, 1994), 30.

⁹ Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 94–103.

¹⁰ Barrow, "English cathedral communities," 29.

¹¹ G 808.

¹² G 59.5 contains many Old English legal, homiletic and para-liturgical texts besides this excerpt, which

probably written at Christ Church, Canterbury in the third quarter of the eleventh century.¹³ The eleventh-century copies are all Latin texts with either an Old English prose translation or glossary. On the face of it, this is not an impressive collection, but only five copies of the original *Regula canonicorum* survive from the Continent, and, despite its singular importance to the Reform movement, only three whole or fragmentary copies of the *Regularis concordia* are extant from pre-Conquest England.¹⁴ Two of these actually form a composite manuscript written at mid eleventh-century Christ Church, Canterbury, part of a large collection of material suitable for an archbishop's pastoral use.¹⁵ Given the uncertain use of the *OEERC*, and the late date for the composition of the *Regularis concordia*, it is not terribly surprising that the extant manuscripts date almost exclusively from the eleventh century. What is more surprising is that of the dozen or so Anglo-Saxon copies of *Rule of St Benedict*, only one pre-dates the tenth century.¹⁶ It is difficult to know what to make of all this except to say that in most cases these texts survive as parts of much larger compilations of texts. The inescapable conclusion to be drawn, from the manuscript evidence at least, is that once the *OEERC* and the *Regularis concordia* ceased to be useful in the centuries after the Conquest, manuscripts slowly disappeared from libraries throughout the kingdom.

If the manuscript evidence tells us little about the observance of rules in English cathedrals, ancillary evidence is perhaps a bit more illuminating. A stray reference to communal life in a report of papal legates dated 786, for instance, suggests that Chrodegang's original rule might have been known in England within thirty years of its production in c. 755.¹⁷ Linguistic and textual analysis of extant copies of the *OEERC* shows that late tenth-century Winchester was the likely source of a common exemplar.¹⁸ Winchester's interest in the text is not immediately obvious, but as Barrow points out, it speaks to the challenges monk-bishops would face in the administration of secular cathedrals.¹⁹ Ælfric's use of the text as a source for his pastoral letters and Wulfstan's incorporation of it into some of his pastoral manuscripts tend to belie the notion that it had limited appeal. Since the intended beneficiaries of these works were not solely cathedral canons but perhaps also minster and other clergy, it might imply that observance of the communal life was more widespread. This point is, however, even more contentious.²⁰

Apart from the rules themselves, texts written specifically for the performance

is a short but convoluted discussion of whether or not clerks in minor orders should be married (*OEERC*, c. 83).

¹³ G 206f.

¹⁴ *OEERC*, 32–5; G 332, 363 and 65f. Excerpts appear in G 59, 332 and 925.

¹⁵ G 332 and 363; G 65f, G 59e and 925e, a version of Wulfstan's handbook.

¹⁶ G 631 (viii, Worcester). The remainder are G 29, 41, 55, 101, 189, 248, 262f, 363, 379, 440, 672, and 758f.

¹⁷ *OEERC*, 16. For the synod of 786, see C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils, c. 650–c. 850* (London, 1995), 153–90.

¹⁸ *OEERC*, 139.

¹⁹ Barrow, "English cathedral communities," 32.

²⁰ *OEERC*, 20 and 47–5, but see Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 361–3.

of the Divine Office, the round of prayers around which liturgical life was structured in Benedictine and Chrodegangian communities, also hint at the observance of some form of communal life and liturgy outside of the premier Benedictine sees. The Durham Collectar, for example, which was written somewhere in southern England in the late ninth or early tenth century but glossed at Durham in the later tenth, contains the collects, or short prayers recited early in the Mass and at the end of the Offices. Alicia Corrêa, the text's most recent editor, observes that the Collectar is "predominantly secular in character," but that inconsistencies, omissions and glossing suggest it was used for reference rather than actual liturgy.²¹ The possibility cannot be ruled out, however, that Durham's possession of this manuscript is an indication that the community was observing the Office. If, as Corrêa believes, it represents a transitional form of the liturgy, substantial parts of which had gone out of fashion after the *Regularis concordia* was written, its very survival begs the question why the community at Durham, into which Benedictine monks were installed after the Conquest, kept in its library such an outdated text of the liturgy more appropriate to the community of clerks they replaced than to themselves. And one has to wonder about the passage in the *Libellus de exordio* of Symeon of Durham, which describes how a pious priest (*presbiter*) and sacristan of early eleventh-century Durham, Ealdred, would ring the bells for matins and teach the *pueri* about the Offices.²²

Two other surviving collectars dating to the mid eleventh century, the Leofric Collectar and the Portiforium of St Wulfstan, further complicate matters.²³ The former reflects Leofric's institution of the communal life at Exeter between 1050 and 1072. The Portiforium of St Wulfstan, which was at Worcester c. 1065, was apparently reworked at Worcester to include collects for nocturnes. The accompanying hymns were similarly reworked. The emendation of a liturgical text suitable for secular canons at Worcester during the pontificate of Wulfstan II is curious in itself; it is even more interesting that its exemplar apparently came from Winchester.²⁴ One interpretation of this evidence is that Worcester maintained more of its secular character than has previously been thought. Another is that copies of the non-monastic liturgy for the Office continued to be produced throughout the eleventh century for distribution to secular communities throughout the kingdom.

The latter possibility is bolstered by evidence of Archbishop Wulfstan's interest in providing the secular clergy with some of the liturgical tools necessary for living a common life. The so-called *Old English Benedictine Office*, which survives in two books belonging to the commonplace tradition, is essentially a

²¹ *The Durham Collectar*, ed. A. Corrêa, HBS 107 (London, 1992), 77–9.

²² *LDE*, iii, §7. The composition of the Durham community was apparently ambiguous even in the later eleventh century. The *Libellus de exordio* records that when Walcher, who was appointed bishop of Durham in 1072, arrived there, he found neither monks nor canons, but it goes on to acknowledge, as the existence of the Collectar suggests, that the community was used to singing the psalms as prescribed by the *Rule* of St Benedict (*LDE*, iii, §18; Aird, *St Cuthbert*, 111–12).

²³ G 431 and 104.

²⁴ *Durham Collectar*, 123, 128.

vernacular prose commentary on the Hours derived from Hrabanus Maurus.²⁵ It includes metrical paraphrases of the three fundamental statements of Christian faith and doctrine, the *Gloria*, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. As its editor and others have noted, the text in its present form cannot be used to perform the Hours because there are no psalms, but it could have functioned as stage-notes for the secular clergy who were not as familiar as monks with the biblical reasons for singing the Hours.²⁶ More recently, John William Houghton has plausibly suggested that the text was written for monastic clergy for use in instruction of the secular clergy – canons, to be sure, but perhaps also parish clergy.²⁷ Either interpretation is strengthened by the existence, in one manuscript, of the chapter from Book I of the *Rule of Aachen*, which describes the ideal common life, and a variety of pastoral texts such as the *Canons of Edgar*, *Handbook for a Confessor*, two of Ælfric's Pastoral Letters, homilies and a penitential.²⁸ These manuscripts would have been extremely useful to a community of secular clergy, episcopal or otherwise, living and working in the manner both Ælfric and Wulfstan advocated.

Two final texts associated with Ælfric and Wulfstan, surviving in two other versions of Wulfstan "commonplace book," further underscore the expectation that the Hours would be celebrated widely. Labeled *De ecclesiastica consuetudine* and *Institutio beati Amalarii de ecclesiasticis officiis*, the former adapts the *Regularis concordia* for use in a secular context through the interpolation of the latter.²⁹ Because it is related to Ælfric's *Letter for the Monks of Eynsham*, which also interpolates the *Institutio*, Christopher Jones has argued that the monk had some connection to its production, whether through authorship or inspiration.³⁰ Regardless of who was responsible for composing it, the *DEC*, like the *OEBO*, betrays a practical interest in the mechanics of secular liturgical life. By themselves, they are not evidence that the communal life was widely practiced in late Anglo-Saxon England, but they do suggest that the architects of the reform movement – and Wulfstan must be considered one of them – envisioned that its impact would extend far beyond the confines of the kingdom's monasteries.

What is certain, however, is that the participation of the reformed Benedictine houses in the production of these books, some of which are decorated, cautions against "drawing a sharp distinction between the spiritual, material, and visual cultures of the monastic churches and the secular churches at this time."³¹ Indeed, the source of both the Leofric Collectar and the Portiforium is Stephen of Liège's early tenth-century *Liber capitularis*, either directly or indirectly, which means that ideas related to Continental secular reform influenced the liturgical practices

²⁵ G 65.5 and 644. *OEBO*, 15.

²⁶ *OEBO*, 62–3.

²⁷ J. W. Houghton, "The Old English Benedictine Office and its audience," *ABR* 45 (1994), 444–5.

²⁸ G 644 (Worcester). Companion volumes contain more homilies (G 637 and 638) as well as computus tables and a calendar (637). G 65.5 (New Minster, Winchester?) contains many of the same texts, but its emphasis is doctrinal and legal rather than pastoral.

²⁹ G 59 (Worcester) and 925 (?); C. A. Jones, "Two composite texts from Archbishop Wulfstan's 'commonplace book': the *De ecclesiastica consuetudine* and the *Institutio beati Amalarii de ecclesiasticis officiis*," *ASE* 27 (1998), 250.

³⁰ Jones, "Two composite texts," 254.

³¹ Gameson, *Role of Art*, 244.

of English monastic communities.³² As already noted, Ælfric's letter for the monks of Eynsham, which is a type of customary, draws heavily on Amalarius's *Liber Officialis*, a text which treats the secular offices.³³ The letter is extant only in a version of Archbishop Wulfstan's so-called 'handbook' of canonical material copied at St Wulfstan II's Worcester, a manuscript also containing pontifical rites such as the Chrism Mass.³⁴ Worcester's interest in this text raises some interesting questions that cannot be answered here, but in the words of the text's editor, Christopher Jones, "to witness at this point and place, the monastic tradition turning to the secular for such a basic resource is another indication that "reform," as Ælfric understood it, was of necessity pragmatic and synthetic, its fortunes more closely bound to the non-monastic church than earlier polemic had been able to admit."³⁵

Underlying textual connections between the *Regularis concordia* and the OEERC further caution against drawing too stark a separation between the forms of life they promoted. While the *Regularis concordia* draws its inspiration *prima facie* from the *Rule* of St Benedict, Patrick Wormald has shown that its ideological affinities lay as much with the Carolingian reform program of Benedict of Aniane as they did with Lotharingian- or Cluniac-style Benedictine reform, a sentiment recently echoed by Mechthild Gretsch.³⁶ Wormald points out that its unprecedented harnessing of royal authority in the reforming process is not a return to Benedictine first principles but rather the promotion of "the Carolingian ideology of a Christian Empire, serving one God, one king and one Rule."³⁷ The author (or authors) of the *Regularis concordia* show more than a passing acquaintance with two texts associated with the Carolingian program, the *Rule of Aachen* and the *Memoriale qualiter*, both of which were in circulation, sometimes in the same manuscript, in tenth- and eleventh-century England.³⁸ The *Rule of Aachen*, it will be recalled, was a component of the OEERC, but it was also incorporated into Wulfstan's *Institutes of Polity*, a homily written by Ælfric, and a rule apparently used at pre-Conquest St Paul's, London.³⁹ It further survives bound with a copy of the *Memoriale qualiter* in a manuscript usually attributed to turn of the eleventh-century Winchester.⁴⁰

The intertextuality of these sources, one traditionally secular and the other monastic, highlights the extent to which reform in England was envisioned in very broad terms. The same may be said for Chrodegang's rule for canons, which, although written for the secular clergy, owes much of its inspiration to the *Rule* of

³² V. Ortenberg, *The English Church and the Continent in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries: Cultural, Spiritual and Artistic Exchange* (Oxford, 1992), 65–6.

³³ *LME*, 60–2.

³⁴ *LME*, no. 39 and p. 83. The manuscript is G 73.

³⁵ *LME*, 70.

³⁶ M. Gretsch, "Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 57: a witness to the early stages of the Benedictine reform in England?" *ASE* 32 (2003), 111–46.

³⁷ P. Wormald, "Æthelwold and his Continental counterparts: contact, comparison, contrast," in *Bishop Æthelwold*, 32.

³⁸ Wormald, "Æthelwold," 31 and n. 74. Cf. G 29, 41, 363e, 379, 440, 926.

³⁹ Barrow, "English cathedral communities," 30–2.

⁴⁰ G 926 and Wormald, "Æthelwold," 31 n. 74.

St Benedict. Martin Claussen has recently argued that Chrodegang's decision to base his rule on St Benedict's, when he certainly had other options, reflected his belief in the universal values it espouses. Chrodegang adapted Benedict's *Rule* for use in a secular community where pastoral care was central to the mission of the clergy who lived there. Its underlying values, humility and moderation, were values he clearly thought applicable to all religious, and not just monks.⁴¹ Reflecting its pastoral character, Chrodegang's *Rule* places much greater emphasis on teaching than do the monastic rules, and it incorporates the theme of Gregory's *Pastoral Care* that in order to be good teachers, bishops, archdeacons and provosts must lead not only by words but by deeds. They must, in other words, transform themselves into models worthy of imitation: "teaching without the appropriate conduct of life makes a man arrogant and an exemplary life becomes futile without teaching."⁴² As Claussen notes, "the stress for Chrodegang is once again on a sort of interiority, in this case, that the office demands a new commitment to religious life, to live that life by deeds."⁴³ Chrodegang's *Rule* and the *OEERC* thus dovetail with the many of the texts discussed in the previous chapter.

Other books required for the Mass and Office survive in much greater number, but they add little to our understanding of liturgical life as it was practiced in individual cathedral communities. Helmut Gneuss has identified twenty-nine of the extant fifty-nine surviving Gospel-books or, less commonly, Gospel lectionaries, as likely to have been used in the liturgy of the Mass.⁴⁴ Likewise, psalters with canticles survive in relatively large numbers.⁴⁵ Psalms were integral to the singing of the Office, and while clergy were supposed to memorize them, psalters with accompanying canticles with prayers were probably used for liturgical rather than instructional purposes.⁴⁶ Only fragments of antiphoners, books containing office chants, are extant, and virtually nothing can be ascertained about their production, but the relatively small group of extant hymnals points to pre-Conquest Christ Church, Canterbury as a center of production.⁴⁷ What is perhaps the only peculiar feature of the liturgical evidence is that so few Bibles including the Old Testament survive: only thirteen whole or part plus nine fragments are extant from the tenth century on. Mechthild Gretsch attributes this to the "strong aversion to unguided Old Testament reading discernable in the most influential school in late Anglo-Saxon England," to wit, Æthelwold's

⁴¹ Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, chapter 3, esp. 121. Chrodegang's rule begins with a lengthy chapter on the importance of humility (*OEERC*, c. 1).

⁴² And "teaching becomes only truly useful when it is diligently put into practice by the one who is preaching it" (*OEERC*, c. 58).

⁴³ Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 141.

⁴⁴ H. Gneuss, "Liturgical books in Anglo-Saxon England and their Old English terminology," in *Learning and Literature*, D.1–29.

⁴⁵ Gneuss, "Liturgical books," 114 and H.1–27 and Gretsch for twenty-nine nearly complete psalters and eight fragments (M. Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* (Cambridge, 1999), 6).

⁴⁶ M. Berry, "What the Saxon monks sang: music in Winchester in the late tenth century," in *Bishop Æthelwold*, 151.

⁴⁷ Gneuss, "Liturgical books," 117–19 and K 1–8.

Winchester, but she notes a similar downward trend in the production of Bibles on the Continent.⁴⁸ Given the vagaries of survival and the inability of scholars to attribute many manuscripts to particular centers of production and use, all that can be said from a superficial examination of liturgical manuscripts is that the Divine Office was alive and well in Anglo-Saxon England, presumably in all Benedictine communities. Its observance should not, however, be ruled out for some, or even many, secular communities on the basis of the manuscript evidence alone. Indeed, the inclusion of an antiphoner in the mid eleventh-century booklist of Sherburn-in-Elmet, a church associated with the archbishopric of York, suggests that the Office was sung in some smaller communities of secular clerks as well as cathedral churches.⁴⁹ It is worth returning briefly in this context to Ælfric's pastoral letter on behalf of Bishop Wulfsgie, which not only admonishes diocesan priests to follow their rule, but acknowledges explicitly that they *know* they have a rule to follow, if only they would just do it.⁵⁰ At the end of the day, manuscript evidence supports the proposition that some form of communal, liturgical life was being observed in secular as well as monastic communities, some cathedral and some much smaller. It also seems to suggest that interest in the common life for clerics, although clearly a topic of discussion in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, may have only picked up in earnest in the middle of the eleventh.

Narrative sources rarely witness the existence of secular communal life in Anglo-Saxon England, but there are a few, admittedly late, references. It is well known that the cathedral communities of Wells and Exeter followed a common life under their Lotharingian bishops, Giso and Leofric, respectively.⁵¹ That the common life was attractive to a wider variety of clergy and laymen, however, is clear from other stray references. When Earl Leofric and his wife refounded the minster at Stowe c. 1053 with the support of Bishop Wulfwig of Dorchester, the canons were admonished to live as the cathedral canons of St Paul's, London.⁵² The likelihood that the canons of St Paul's observed the Divine Office is corroborated by the preservation of an eleventh-century version of the *Rule of Aachen* in an early fourteenth-century set of cathedral constitutions.⁵³ It hardly seems likely that such a reference would have been made in the charter if this were not the case. Eleventh-century interest in the communal life for minster clergy is further illustrated by Archbishop Ealdred's completion of the renovation of Beverley minster, a project which was begun by Archbishop Ælfric (1023–51) to make the minster a worthy repository for the physical remains and liturgical memory of the recently canonized eighth-century Bishop John of Beverley.⁵⁴ Ealdred also built

⁴⁸ Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, 13.

⁴⁹ "Booklists," no. 6. See also, C&S, no. 48 §45.

⁵⁰ "Ge habbað eac regol, gyf ge hine rædan woldan (C&S, no. 40 §101).

⁵¹ *Historiola*, 16–17 and GP, §94.

⁵² RASC, no. 115.

⁵³ Brooke, *London*, 339, but see Barrow, "English cathedral communities," 31. For the possibility that pre-Conquest Rochester followed a communal life, see M. Brett, "The church at Rochester, 664–1185" in *Faith and Fabric. A History of Rochester Cathedral*, ed. W. N. Yates (Woodbridge, 1996), 8–9.

⁵⁴ Barlow, *English Church I*, 73, 89–90.

refectories at York and Southwell.⁵⁵ And when Earl Harold decided to establish a religious community in 1060, he chose to fashion his new foundation at Waltham Holy Cross along the lines of a college of secular canons, complete with a dean, a master and twelve canons. According to the house history, Harold installed the Lotharingian Adelard as master, because he would “establish in the church at Waltham the rules, ordinances and customs, both ecclesiastical and secular, of the churches in which he himself had been educated.”⁵⁶ A final reference, although late, to the Hampshire minster of Christchurch, which purportedly had twenty-four canons who celebrated the Divine Office, certainly hints at the possibility of a wider practice that does not leave much of an imprint on our sources.⁵⁷ The logical conclusion of all this is that because ecclesiastical trends in this period tend to trickle down rather than up, it is unlikely that cathedral culture was untouched by the growing enthusiasm for the regular life, a trend we might even expect was anticipated earlier in the cathedrals of Anglo-Saxon England, due in large measure to Benedictine reform.

Given the dearth of contemporary evidence, and the hostility of twelfth-century sources to the secular life, it is unlikely we will ever know much about liturgical life in most Anglo-Saxon cathedrals. It is not even clear how many monks or canons lived in these communities. Eadmer counted sixty monks at Canterbury in 1070, although there were probably fewer before the Conquest.⁵⁸ A late thirteenth-century source indicates that there had always been twenty-four canons and vicars at Exeter, but compared with the four or five canons Giso found living at Wells in the 1060s, this number seems too high.⁵⁹ Domesday Book refers to two canons living at Hereford, while four were said to be living at Rochester in 1077.⁶⁰ Relative to the larger Benedictine cathedrals, these were obviously small communities, but there is no reason to assume they were not viable liturgical communities simply on the basis of their size.

The eleventh century was a period of transition throughout the western Church, a period in which a variety of ecclesiastical lifestyles – Benedictine communities, canons living under a rule, proto-prebendal arrangements, and combinations of these – were being practiced side by side, mostly without engendering any comment. The efficacy of communities of clerks as spiritual centers in a theoretical sense does not seem to have been in any serious doubt at any time in our period, Æthelwold notwithstanding. Indeed, as John Blair has persuasively argued, the control of minsters remained an integral element of royal, episcopal and aristocratic spiritual, social and economic strategies well beyond the

⁵⁵ HCY, II, 353–4.

⁵⁶ *Waltham Chronicle*, c. 15. The canons may have followed the *Rule of Aachen* instead of the *OEERC* (Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 362).

⁵⁷ The text dates from the fourteenth century, and refers specifically to the post-Conquest minster, it is obviously problematic (Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 516).

⁵⁸ Brooks, *Early History*, 260–1.

⁵⁹ Statutes of Walter Brouncombe, 1268; F. Barlow, “Leofric and his times,” in *Essays in Commemoration of the Foundation of Exeter Cathedral Library in AD 1072*, ed. F. Barlow (Exeter, 1972), 10; *Historiola*, 16–17.

⁶⁰ DB, i, 181; GP, §72; *Life of Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester*, ed. R. Thomson (Toronto, 1977), 17. E. U. Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter in Twelfth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1994), 21 and note 40.

Conquest.⁶¹ Reflecting on the community at Christ Church, Canterbury, which appears to have remained mixed well into the eleventh century, Nicholas Brooks has observed that “until then there is no indication that royal or noble benefactors saw the advent of the monks at Christ Church as a change which made the community’s prayers more effective and more worthy of their patronage.”⁶² Leofric and his wife clearly knew their options; they had, after all, founded Coventry Priory in c. 1043 in lavish style to serve as their family mausoleum.⁶³ By all accounts they spread their wealth around, giving lands to Worcester cathedral, Evesham Abbey and perhaps Burton Abbey as well as the minster churches of Chester St John, Chester St Werburgh, Leominster and Wenlock.⁶⁴ Some of these grants probably reflect the conventional piety of an earl who supported a variety of churches within his orbit, but the stipulation that the canons of Stowe follow a particular rule nevertheless indicates that this noble couple had more than a passing interest in the form of life practiced there.

We shall probably never know how most cathedral clergymen lived or the extent to which liturgical life was influenced by the sitting bishop. The extant evidence certainly does not entitle us to argue that these were model Chrodegangian communities, but neither does it suggest we should assume the very worst. There is every reason to believe that the canons of Hereford Cathedral, who probably did not live communally, nevertheless commanded the respect of local laymen; at least one bequeathed property to the community and two sought its protection by having their lawsuits recorded in the cathedral’s Gospel-book.⁶⁵ In the pre-Gregorian world, there was a great deal of latitude in the range of acceptable practices, although standards were higher at some times than others. The communal life for both monks and canons seems to have been the ideal until well after the Conquest, a point made most succinctly by the fact that the Norman monk Remigius chose to reform his community of clerks at Lincoln not as a monastic priory, which was the trend elsewhere in post-Conquest England, but as a secular chapter with whose canons even William of Malmesbury could find no fault.⁶⁶ That secular canons could and did exceed the highest of expectations is surely evidenced in the remarkable library assembled by the post-Conquest canons of Salisbury.⁶⁷

Given the relative certainty that Anglo-Saxon monastic cathedrals followed the *Regularis concordia*, and the likelihood that some secular cathedrals observed the *OEERC* at some point in time, it is worth considering what the rules them-

⁶¹ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 508–9.

⁶² Brooks, *Early History*, 256.

⁶³ JW, s.a. 1057. J. Hunt, “Piety, prestige or politics? The house of Leofric and the foundation and patronage of Coventry Priory,” in *Coventry’s First Cathedral. The Cathedral and Priory of St Mary*, ed. G. Demidowica (Stamford, 1994), 97–117.

⁶⁴ JW, s.a. 1057.

⁶⁵ RASC, no. 78; *Wills*, no. 19. J. Barrow, “Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056–1268,” in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, ed. G. Aylmer and J. Tiller (London and Rio Grande, 2000), 22.

⁶⁶ Bates, *Remigius*, 23–4 and *GP*, §177, where William praises the canons for their scholarship.

⁶⁷ Commenting on the mutual spiritual interests of monks and canons throughout the early Middle Ages, Teresa Webber reminds us that “the predominance of monastic texts amongst the texts of spiritual guidance acquired by the Salisbury canons should not surprise us” (Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 114).

selves tell us about life in an Anglo-Saxon cathedral. What is perhaps most remarkable is not the differences they suggest but the similarities. Life in cathedral communities subject to these rules, whether monastic or secular, revolved around participation in daily Masses and the Divine Office, times set aside throughout the night and day for communal prayer. The purpose of the sequence of prayers was not to keep the clergy busy but to “relive Christ’s passion in a chronological way.”⁶⁸ Eight Offices spread throughout the night and day were interspersed with two Masses, one regular and one for the royal family. There was also the Chapter Office, which took place between the Masses, and one or two meals, depending on the time of year.⁶⁹ While it included readings from the *Rule*, the Gospels and a section of the martyrology appropriate to the day, the principal business of the Chapter Office was administrative.⁷⁰ Periods in between the Offices were taken up with additional observances, including prayers for the royal family, penitential psalms and private Masses, as well as periods of work, private meditation and reading. By the time they retired, the monks’ day had lasted, on average, about nineteen hours, as many as eleven of which might have been spent singing.⁷¹ Properly observed, this was a grueling schedule by any standard.

Observance of the Offices in the *OEERC* is remarkably similar to that described in the *Regularis*, although its treatment in the text is considerably shorter.⁷² While less attention is paid to the exact psalms, prayers and hymns than in the *Regularis concordia*, which was concerned with liturgical correctness in excruciating detail, the theological and scriptural (both Old and New Testament) significance of each Hour is generally provided. The centrality of the Divine Office is underscored in the *OEERC*’s requirement that both bishops and cathedral clergy who were traveling observe the Hours wherever they were.⁷³ Attendance at Chapter was a particularly important part of the day, perhaps even more so for canons than for monks. It was an opportunity to listen to fundamental texts and to admit one’s faults, as it was in the *Regularis concordia*, but Martin Claussen interprets Chrodegang’s vision of the Chapter more as an educational tool and a means of building community than the means by which discipline was enforced.⁷⁴ Its broader pastoral role was also emphasized in Chrodegang’s invitation to priests outside the community to attend on Sundays and feast days.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ The night Office anticipated the Second Coming, lauds the celebration of the Resurrection, terce, sext and none the recollection of Christ’s death, vespers the Last Supper, and compline Christ’s burial. Although the events are out of order, they make theological sense in that all events in the life of Christ are subordinated to the Resurrection (Raw, *Crucifixion Iconography*, 165–6). See also M. Kobialka, *This is My Body: Representational Practices in the Early Middle Ages* (Ann Arbor, 1999), 62–72.

⁶⁹ RC, cc. 20–3. Berry, “What the monks sang,” 150.

⁷⁰ RC, c. 21 and xl.

⁷¹ Berry, “What the monks sang,” 151.

⁷² *OEERC*, cc. 12–22.

⁷³ *OEERC*, cc. 22 and 25.

⁷⁴ Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 71; *OEERC*, c. 16.

⁷⁵ Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 71, refers to c. 8; it is interesting to note that this same provision does not seem to have been included in the *OEERC*, yet even women parishioners appear to have been present at the Easter Vespers at Waltham (*Waltham Chronicle*, c. 26).

Although the text is not explicit, it is also likely that diocesan priests were periodically invited to join the cathedral clergy for dinner, probably at the bishop's expense.⁷⁶ Laymen and women were also allowed to dine with the community, but only with the bishop's permission and only after checking their weapons at the door.⁷⁷ It is worth emphasizing how flexible all cathedrals, whether monastic or secular, had to be in their dealings with the outside world. Both rules, of course, provide for the Lenten tradition of washing the feet of several poor men, in addition to feeding them, but the *OEERC* also provided for a separate guesthouse, "in a suitable place which is easily accessible."⁷⁸ It is also clear from scattered evidence that laymen and women joined monks and canons in major celebrations such as Candlemas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and the Rogation Days, celebrations which often included communal processions among local churches.⁷⁹ As M. Bradford Bedingfield has shown, the dramatic quality of the liturgy was heightened over the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries specifically to make the Christian experience more accessible to the unlearned.⁸⁰ Distinctions between monks and canons on the one hand, he argues, and clergy and laymen on the other, tended to evaporate during the major feast days as all joined together to participate in the commemoration of the most important events in the life of Christ. Above all, liturgical evidence suggests how important it was to the reformers, in particular Æthelwold, to communicate the monastic experience to the laity, complete with instructions as to its meaning.⁸¹ The pastoral responsibilities of the cathedral are more clearly reflected in the *OEERC*, but the *Regularis concordia* implies an unprecedented degree of reaching out to diocesan priests and the laity by monastic communities, only a handful of which were actually cathedral communities.

Intellectual Culture

Many of the texts discussed so far in this chapter and the last underscore the importance of the teaching function of a cathedral. Bishops themselves were teachers and heralds of God's word, and they could not easily have performed this function without cathedral schools, however rudimentary. Not only did cathedrals serve members of their own communities and presumably diocesan priests, but often also the children of local aristocrats, such as the son of Segild of Droitwich, who was sent to study at Worcester with Coleman, St Wulfstan's friend and biographer.⁸² Because so little is known about pre-Conquest cathedral

⁷⁶ *OEERC*, c. 34. Here, "the eschatological unity of the church is prefigured in the gathering together of the community in feast" (Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 92).

⁷⁷ *OEERC*, c. 11.

⁷⁸ *OEERC*, c. 43.

⁷⁹ For detailed descriptions of these processions and other rituals, see M. B. Bedingfield, *The Dramatic Liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2002), chapters 3, 4–6 and 8.

⁸⁰ Bedingfield, *Dramatic Liturgy*, 222–8.

⁸¹ Bedingfield, *Dramatic Liturgy*, 226.

⁸² VSW, ii, 13.

libraries, it is only reasonable to assume that most possessed at least the means to educate men and boys in an elementary fashion. Both the *Regularis concordia* and the *OEERC* assume that education will be vigorously promoted in cathedrals where the rules were observed. Even where no rule was followed, the need to train priests and to keep even the most basic of records necessitated a literate clergy. That the average monk of Canterbury was better educated than the average manorial priest seems obvious, but beyond this it is difficult to determine exactly who was literate and in what languages at any given time. Simon Keynes has argued that a “proportion” of the late Anglo-Saxon elite was probably literate in English, while James Campbell has suggested that some of these could also read Latin.⁸³ The Preface to King Alfred’s translation of the *Pastoral Care* clearly calls on all free men of means to acquire basic literacy in the vernacular and in Latin if they desire higher office.⁸⁴ And the *Colloquy* composed by Ælfric later in the tenth century hints at the utility of acquiring Latin for some of the kingdom’s laity.⁸⁵ Literacy in the vernacular was, at least, desirable of all clergymen, regardless of their function in the ecclesiastical world. Prescriptive and liturgical evidence, not to mention common sense, make that evident enough.⁸⁶ Yet historians generally remain quite pessimistic in their assessment of literacy, even among the clergy, in Anglo-Saxon society.⁸⁷ Much has been made, for instance, of the apparent need in the tenth century for a vernacular translation of the *Rule* of St Benedict, for which King Edgar and his wife purportedly paid Æthelwold handsomely.⁸⁸

The corpus of extant manuscripts can tell us about clerical training to some degree in that many of the surviving texts were suitable for use as school texts. It is not generally possible to reconstruct from the surviving manuscript evidence, however, the precise nature of the curriculum of the cathedral schools, although the type of education available in some is clearer than in others. What the corpus does illuminate, however, is the mental world of the Church as a whole, which must reflect, on some level, the mental world of its pastoral leaders. In the rare cases that books can be associated with particular bishops, it is possible to be more specific about their interests, intellectual as well as liturgical and pastoral. For the most part, however, we have to be satisfied with a general impression of these interests. In the end, though, even a superficial reading of the evidence does suggest that the prescriptive call for greater attention to pastoral care sent out in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries was met, in part, as it was in Alfred’s day, by the production and distribution of texts.

⁸³ S. Keynes, “Royal government and the written word in late Anglo-Saxon England,” in *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. R. McKitterick (Cambridge, 1990), 226–57 and Campbell, “England c. 991,” 6–17.

⁸⁴ *EHD*, I, no. 226.

⁸⁵ D. Bullough, “The educational tradition in England from Alfred to Ælfric: teaching *utriusque linguae*,” *Settimani* 19 (Spoleto, 1972), 492–3.

⁸⁶ *C&S*, no. 57.

⁸⁷ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 495.

⁸⁸ *LE*, ii, c. 35, in exchange for Sudbourne manor. Mechthild Gretsch argues that the translation was undertaken between the 940s and 950s, to aid in the monastic conversion of the various sites (Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, 234–40).

Grammar was the foundation for all study, or, in Ælfric's words, "the key that unlocks the meaning of books."⁸⁹ Along with rhetoric and dialectic, it comprised the trivium, the first three of the seven liberal arts recognized in the Middle Ages.⁹⁰ Unsurprisingly, the most popular grammatical text in Anglo-Saxon England was Ælfric's *Latin Grammar* with Old English glossary: ten whole and three fragmentary eleventh-century copies of this text (nine of which are pre-Conquest) survive.⁹¹ Ælfric's Latin grammar and glossary presume the existence of a clergy literate in Old English; it was thus the bridge between the vernacular world of the laity and the Latin world of the Church. After the mastery of language came the arts of oratory (rhetoric) and logic (dialectic), both of which were useful for students destined for public service, lay or ecclesiastical. Three texts popular across the West were Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*, Alcuin's *De orthographia*, and Isidore of Seville's popular encyclopedia, the *Etymologiae*, all of which are represented in the extant corpus.⁹² The standard work of rhetoric, Cicero's *De inventione*, and Alcuin's popular introduction to logic, *De dialectica*, are also represented.⁹³ These texts often survive together in larger collections, probably as exemplars for the copying of others. The older ones were also quite often absorbed into later texts or were themselves the subjects of commentaries, guaranteeing them continued life.⁹⁴ But because so few manuscripts can be attributed to particular scriptoria, obvious patterns are impossible to discern. The most that can be said is that the core texts, many of which remained integral to the study of the trivium in the Middle Ages, were known in Anglo-Saxon England. Obviously, the average parish priest had little use for Ciceronian rhetoric, but Ælfric's bilingual grammar must have been useful to anyone learning the rudiments of Christian belief and practice. And the monk or canon who did aspire to greater intellectual heights could, it seems, be accommodated somewhere in late Anglo-Saxon England. Canterbury and Winchester are the obvious contenders, but other centers of learning cannot be ruled out.

A consideration of the texts related to the study of the quadrivium – arithmetic, astronomy, music and geometry – yields similar results. The range of available texts seems to have been limited in the early Middle Ages. Treatises on arithmetic, the foundation for the study of the other subjects, and most importantly, for

⁸⁹ Quoted in Bullough, "The educational tradition," 488.

⁹⁰ For what follows, generally, see *The Seven Liberal Arts in the Middle Ages*, ed. D. L. Wagner (Bloomington, 1983).

⁹¹ G 13, 115, 244, 331, 336, 414, 435, 441f, 480f, 494, 686, and 876f. Only the Glossary was excerpted in G 541, a manuscript with Continental origins. The Latin grammarians Donatus (c. 350) and Priscian (c. 500) are represented in several earlier manuscripts, but it seems clear that Ælfric superseded them, doubtless because his grammar was based on them (V. Law, "The study of grammar," in *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*, ed. R. McKitterick (Cambridge, 1994), 96). Priscian (G 127.3f, 211f and 809.9e); Donatus (321 and 829e).

⁹² Martianus (G 48, 373e, 423e, and 428.4e; "Booklists," no. XI.6), Alcuin (G 69 and 438), and Isidore (G 154.5f, 173e, 176e, 185e, 311e, 442.4e, 469, 524.4f, 682, 784.5e, 821f, 885f, 889 and 919.3e; "Booklists," no. X.41).

⁹³ Cicero: G 216.6; Alcuin: G 67 and 784.5.

⁹⁴ Remigius of Auxerre's commentaries on the grammars of Donatus and Priscian, for example, are extant in G 326 and 775.

the reckoning of ecclesiastical time, principally included Bede's *De temporibus anni*, Martianus's *De nuptiis*, Boethius's *De institutione arithmetica*, and Ælfric's *De temporibus anni*, all of which are extant in a handful of pre-Conquest manuscripts.⁹⁵ To this group should be added Byrhtferth of Ramsey's *Enchiridion*, a mixed vernacular and Latin commentary on previous computistical writings, including Bede's, composed in c. 1011.⁹⁶ Although part of the quadrivium, the early medieval study of astronomy was necessarily rudimentary, and depended on the channeling of Greek ideas through Martianus and Isidore, whose texts could be supplemented by the works of Macrobius, Cicero and Hyginus, all of which were known in later Anglo-Saxon England.⁹⁷ Many of these same texts, particularly the works of Martianus and Macrobius, were used for the study of music and geometry as well. Like the texts associated with the trivium (except for Ælfric, that is), these come down to us principally in large collections: combinations of the astronomical works of Macrobius, Cicero and Hyginus, for example, appear in the same five late tenth- or eleventh-century manuscripts with Winchester and Canterbury connections.⁹⁸ It may be, as Stephanie Hollis has argued, that the quadrivium was not universally taught in Anglo-Saxon England, but it is also possible that we simply cannot tell from the state of the extant evidence.⁹⁹ Texts on the reckoning of time were certainly necessary in all ecclesiastical communities. Beyond this, it remains an open question as to how dedicated English communities, monastic as well as secular, were to the study of the formal curriculum. After all, monks and canons who observed the Divine Office probably learned a great deal of Latin in the process of memorizing the psalms.¹⁰⁰

For clergymen seeking greater intellectual challenges, the works of the late Antique, mostly Christian Latin poets, principally Juvenius, Lactantius, Prudentius, Sedulius, Prosper of Aquitaine and Venantius Fortunatus, were sources of spiritual inspiration and models of emulation. In the hands of these gifted poets, the events of the New Testament and the core beliefs of the Christian faith were reiterated in the challenging medium of hexametric verse, which, if manuscript evidence is anything to go by, was popular throughout Europe in the early Middle Ages. A handful of surviving booklists, as well as a relatively high number of actual manuscript copies, attest to the popularity of these texts, in particular Prudentius's *Psychomachia* and Sedulius's *Carmen Paschale*.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ Bede (G 384, 521.7f, 784e, 818f, 856f and 902e); Boethius (G 97, 669.4 677.5, and 886). Also Helperic, *De computo* (G 186) and Ælfric (G 11, 363e, 373, 380, 404f and 918e).

⁹⁶ G 26e and 526; Bullough, "The educational tradition," 486. The *Enchiridion* was apparently a companion aid to decoding a more complicated Latin computus: Byrhtferth's *Enchiridion*, ed. P. S. Baker and M. Lapidge, EETS ss 15 (London, 1995).

⁹⁷ Macrobius, *In Somnium Scipionis* (G 1.5f, 373e, 423e and 428.4e); Cicero, *Aratea* (G 186, 373, 423 and 428.4); and Hyginus, *Astronomica* (G 1.5, 186e, 423e and 428.4).

⁹⁸ G 1.5f, 186, 373, 423 and 428.4, among others.

⁹⁹ S. Hollis, "Scientific and medical writings," in *Companion*, 193–4. See also M. Lapidge, "Schools, learning and literature in tenth-century England," in *Anglo-Latin Literature*, 41, where it is argued that interest in texts of the quadrivium was sparked by the two-year stay, beginning in 985, of Abbo of Fleury at Ramsey, but that "instruction in the quadrivium did not survive Abbo's departure."

¹⁰⁰ Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, 16–17.

¹⁰¹ Prudentius (G 12, 38, 70, 191, 246, 285, 324, 537, 661, 852f and 889.5); Caelius Sedulius (G 12, 53, 253, 491, 652f, 824.5, 890 and 903); Juvenius, *Libri Evangeliorum* (G 7, 12, 87, 489, 540 and 903);

Communities across England, from the Benedictine cathedrals of Canterbury, Winchester and Worcester, to the secular communities of Durham and Exeter, and a handful of abbeys as well, possessed copies of these dual-purpose books. Although the bulk of these manuscripts are attributable to the turn of the eleventh century, and, disproportionately, to the two communities at Canterbury,¹⁰² a few early copies of the late Antique poets, as well as the very competent verse composed by Aldhelm and Bede, remind us that the Anglo-Saxons enjoyed a long history of appreciation for Latin poetry, which continued throughout the eleventh century. To this group must be added the popular *Disticha Catonis*, a pagan collection of moral sayings used to teach grammar but also suitable for the instruction of verse composition.¹⁰³

There is evidence, albeit sparse, to suggest that the interest of Alfred's Continental scholars helped to foster the continued study and emulation of Latin poetry in the first three quarters of the tenth century, before most of these manuscripts were copied. Archbishop Oda of Canterbury's patronage of the scholar Frithegod, for example, led to the composition of the *Breuiiloquium uitae Wilfridi*, what Lapidge has called "one of the most brilliantly ingenious – but also damnably difficult – Latin products of Anglo-Saxon England."¹⁰⁴ Granted, Frithegod probably trained on the Continent, but Dunstan was a reasonably good poet in his own right, and, while no verse survives from the pen of Æthelwold, he clearly fostered such endeavors at Winchester, where his student Wulfstan Cantor composed the long and complicated *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno*, and perhaps at Abingdon, in the second half of the tenth century.¹⁰⁵ That advanced training was available in a variety of settings is highlighted by the likelihood, as argued in the previous chapter, that these bishops received some of their training at court and cathedral schools that were obviously not yet monasticized. The monks do seem to have accelerated the production of Latin school texts around the turn of the millennium, and the fact that Bishop Leofric donated many of them to his community at Exeter suggests that they might have been producing them for distribution and not just consumption.

Although Christian Latin poetry had much to offer the intellectual elite among the clergy, Anglo-Saxons generally turned to the works of authorities like Augustine and Gregory the Great for the fundamentals of their faith. The full breadth of Augustine's work would only be reproduced in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the manuscript evidence for Augustine's popularity in Anglo-Saxon England is indeed underwhelming, but at least a few texts, including the *Enchiridion*, *Epistolae*, *In psalmos*, *Soliloquia*, *De civitate Dei*, *De adulterinis*

Arator, *Historia apostolica* (G 12, 175, 280, 620.6, 660, 890); Prosper of Aquitaine, *Epigrammata* (G 12, 114, 190, 365, 415); Lactantius, *De phoenice* (G 12 and possibly 535); Venantius, *Carmina* (G 2e, 12, 120e, 142f and 284).

¹⁰² One of the more interesting manuscripts is G 12, a very large St Augustine's manuscript of the mid eleventh-century, in which all of these texts, and many more, are represented.

¹⁰³ G 12, 190, and 389.

¹⁰⁴ M. Lapidge, "A Frankish scholar in tenth-century England: Frithegod of Canterbury/Fredegaud of Brioude," in *Anglo-Latin Literature*, 158.

¹⁰⁵ See the various essays in *Anglo-Latin Literature* and Bullough, "The educational tradition," 482–7.

coniugiis and *De nuptiis et concupiscentia*, seem to have been available.¹⁰⁶ Augustine's *Soliloquia* were also translated into the vernacular by King Alfred. It is interesting to note that no works of Augustine appear on Leofric's list of donated books, but the *Enchiridion* and *Epistolae* do appear on the list of books Abbot Sæwold of Bath donated to Saint-Vaast in Arras c. 1070.¹⁰⁷ It is always possible that Exeter already possessed copies of Augustine's primary works, making it unnecessary for the bishop to procure them, but this is unlikely. The aggressiveness by which later eleventh-century clergy undertook the production and distribution of Augustine's works tends to support the assumption that earlier scribal efforts were generally directed elsewhere.

Focusing too much on surviving manuscripts, however, tends to distort the reality of patristic influence in later Anglo-Saxon England. The greatest impact of Augustine and other patristic authors in pre-Conquest England seems to have been as source material, sometimes more than once removed, for authors whose works do survive. The relatively small surviving corpus of Augustine manuscripts belies, for example, the extent to which he was used as a source by various Anglo-Saxon authors.¹⁰⁸ Major works such as the *Sermones* and *De civitate Dei* were incorporated into works by Bede and Ælfric, and in the case of the latter, the poet of "Genesis A" and a royal diploma.¹⁰⁹ Likewise, the works of Jerome were used by Bede, Willibald, Alcuin, Ælfric, the poets of "Exodus" and "Genesis A," and the "E" version of the *Chronicle*, even though the manuscript evidence suggests interest in this major figure peaked early.¹¹⁰ Surviving Ambrose manuscripts are rather few in number, but booklists contradict the impression his work was obscure in Anglo-Saxon England.¹¹¹ If we add the evidence in manuscripts, booklists, and the *Fontes* database for knowledge of the exegetical works of Cassiodorus, Isidore, Bede and Hrabanus Maurus, it is clear that English clergymen had access to most of the primary works of pastoral care and exegesis available in the early Middle Ages.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ Manuscripts probably in pre-Conquest England include G 132, 188, 512, 751, 794.5, and 919.3 (*Enchiridion*); 799.5 and 801e (*Epistolae*); 692e, 792f and 944.5 (*In psalmos*); 808 (*Soliloquia*); 53e (*De civitate*); 506 (*De adulterinis*); 551 (*De nuptiis*); 30.7 (*De Trinitate*); 418 (*Sermo de disciplina Christiana*). It is possible that G 263, 283, 559 and 752 were also pre-Conquest.

¹⁰⁷ The list of thirty-three books, which "may be taken as evidence of the personal library of an English ecclesiastic at the time of Conquest," was, ironically, entered into a copy of Augustine's *In euangelium Ioannis* ("Booklists," nos. III and X and pp. 58–9).

¹⁰⁸ Thanks to the remarkable *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* Project, it is possible to easily track the transmission of sources in many Anglo-Saxon texts (*Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* Project, ed. *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici: World Wide Web Register*, <http://fontes.english.ox.ac.uk>, accessed August 2005).

¹⁰⁹ The charter is S 906, dated 1004, in favor of Burton Abbey.

¹¹⁰ Most of the Jerome manuscripts pre-date the tenth century (G 103, 128, 173e, 263, 311, 516, 659, 832, 845, 849 and 944; "Booklists," nos. I, IV, VIII and XIII); Ambrose (G 194, 516, 799 and 778).

¹¹¹ G 516e, 799, 832 and perhaps 881; six works appear a total of nine times in three booklists ("Booklists," nos. I, VIII and XIII).

¹¹² Cassiodorus (77e, 154f, 173e, 237, 381e and 822f); Isidore (G 476e, 568e and 575); Bede (12, 274, 280e, 326, 433e, 506, 551, 810 and 831.2f; "Booklists," no. X); Hrabanus (G 12, 178 and 919.3e; "Booklists," nos. III, IV, VIII, XI and XIII). It is worth noting that at the end of the eleventh century, Lanfranc appealed to Bec for copies of Gregory's *Moralia in Job* as well as works of Jerome and Ambrose, only to be told that the abbey did not have scribes capable of copying these texts. Likewise, Canterbury exemplars ended up at Bec (Letters of Lanfranc and Anselm in G. Nortier, *Les Bibliothèques Médiévales des abbeyes Bénédictines des Normandie* (Paris, 1971), 38).

Judging from the combined evidence, the greatest source of inspiration came from the works of Gregory the Great, whose *Pastoral Care* was discussed in the previous chapter. In addition to this fundamental text, Gregory's *Moralia in Job*, *Dialogi* and homilies were as popular in England as they were on the Continent.¹¹³ Two of these texts, the *Pastoral Care* and *Dialogi* were considered important enough to be the subjects of Alfredian translations, and copies of both continued to be made in the late tenth and eleventh centuries. At the same time, the homilies, whose simplicity and accessibility were part of their appeal, were used as sources by a range of authors from Bede, Cynewulf and the Old English martyrologist to Ælfric and the Vercelli and Blickling homilists.¹¹⁴ As will be argued below, the interest in vernacular translations and glosses of works by such seminal figures as Augustine and Gregory the Great was not a reflection of lax standards, but rather a pragmatic approach to the problem of pastoral care.

In addition to pastoral and exegetical works, texts suitable for the teaching of Christian virtues not surprisingly make a strong showing in a corpus more devoted to ethical living than theological inquiry. Augustine as well as Gregory had prescribed that Christians were to imitate the martyrs, and the fifty-odd hagiographical manuscripts from the tenth and eleventh centuries bear witness to the enthusiasm of the Anglo-Saxons for the cult of the saints. Among the more popular saints were Gregory, Cuthbert and Dunstan, but collections of *vitae*, including the OE Martyrology and Ælfric's *Lives of the Saints*, kept the names of a wide range of Christian martyrs and saints from all over the world and from the beginning of Christian history alive in the minds of the Anglo-Saxon clergy and laity through the early eleventh century.¹¹⁵ In addition to the *vitae*, two very famous works, Boethius's *De consolazione philosophiae*, both in the Latin original and in King Alfred's translation, and Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis*, both in verse and prose, provided instruction in virtuous living. If the corpus of extant manuscripts tells us anything, it is how popular these two works were in Anglo-Saxon England, particularly in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries; twenty whole or fragmentary copies of the former and seventeen of the latter are extant.¹¹⁶ Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis* was also part of the Anglo-Saxon canon for inculcating Christian values through the written word, as were collections of moral lessons, or *florilegia*, such as the popular Continental works, Defensor's

¹¹³ *Moralia* (G 668.5f, 840.5e, 858f and 946.5e); *Dialogi* (G 34, 208f, 510, 667, 715, 856.1f, 924e, 937.3 and 943.8); homilies (G 42e, 804.5, 831.6, 911 and 944.5); *Cura pastoralis* (G 261, 346f, 439, 6f, 590, 684, 771f, 800e, 894 and 898.5e). Gregorian texts appear in "Booklists," III, VIII–XI and XIII).

¹¹⁴ G 37, 180, 353, 375f and 626; 92, 207f, 359f and 632f. For the significance of Gregory's homilies on the Continent, see P. A. De Leeuw, "Gregory the Great's homilies on the Gospels in the early Middle Ages," *Studi Medievali* 26 (1985), 855–69.

¹¹⁵ Cuthbert (G 56, 401, 419, 427, 546, 815, 882 and 913); Dunstan (G 323, 781 and 928); Gregory (G 465 and 570); OE Martyrology (39f, 62, 282f, 298f, 338); Ælfric's *Lives* (146f, 262f, 310e, 339, 355, 406 and 476f).

¹¹⁶ Boethius (12, 23, 68, 392e, 408f, 533, 619.9, 671, 678f, 776, 823, 829, 886, 887, 899, 901 and 908; only two copies of Alfred's translation are extant: G 347 and 643f); Aldhelm (verse: G 12, 82, 542, 584 and 661; prose: 93, 458, 462, 464, 466, 473, 509, 545, 613, 707, 806 and 857). Eight of the prose texts were glossed in Old English. See also "Booklists," nos. VIII and X, and *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* for a sense of just how significant both of these works were as sources.

Liber Scintellarum and Smaragdus of St Mihiel's *Diadema Monachorum*.¹¹⁷ The latter was based partly on the *Vitas Patrum*, a collection of anecdotes and sayings related to the desert Fathers, a text apparently of special interest to Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester.¹¹⁸ Leofric of Exeter also owned a copy of Smaragdus's work that he donated to his community, which must mean that the text resonated with secular clerks as well as monks.¹¹⁹

From this brief survey of the works known in Anglo-Saxon England, and the manuscripts associated with them, it is obvious that the basic (and some not-so-basic) educational texts were available across the kingdom. Interest in their production seems to have picked up in the wake of monastic reform, particularly at the scriptoria at Canterbury (both Christ Church and St Augustine's) and Worcester, Winchester and, eventually, Exeter. But this does not rule out production at other places. In many respects, scribes were either adding to or rebuilding venerable libraries of the seventh and eighth centuries, when those of Canterbury, York, Wearmouth/Jarrow and perhaps Aldhelm's Malmesbury "seem to have outshone all other collections of books in the country and perhaps most libraries outside Italy."¹²⁰ By the turn of the eleventh century, the larger scriptoria seem to have been specializing in certain types of books, although this could admittedly be a coincidence of survival. While Canterbury scribes were busy turning out multiple copies of Prudentius, Prosper, Boethius and Aldhelm, Winchester scribes were generating a steady supply of psalters, illuminated benedictionals, and other liturgical texts, many of which ended up in the hands of kings, bishops and foreigners.¹²¹ It is impossible to be sure that multiple copies were intended for distribution, as such large communities had need of a great many books themselves, but it was certainly in keeping with the prescriptive mandate that the clergy be provided with texts suitable for pastoral care. Late Anglo-Saxon Worcester produced more than forty manuscripts, whose eclecticism suggests to Richard Gameson that the monks were only supplementing an already well-stocked library.¹²² Other cathedrals such as Durham, Rochester and Sherborne did produce books in this period, but it does not appear from the extant corpus that they produced them in great quantities. Because 30 percent of the corpus remains unlocalized, however, and because books moved around quite a lot, it is impossible to be more precise about the mechanics of production and distribution.

Even so, more can be said about the content of at least one cathedral library through a consideration of the evidence for Leofric of Exeter's pontificate. Upon

¹¹⁷ Alcuin (G 340e, 363e, 389 and 783); Defensor (G 34.1, 59e and 470); and Smaragdus (G 8 and 41). For the significant influence of Smaragdus, see Deshman, *Benedictional*, esp. 120–1, 170–1, 180–1.

¹¹⁸ The manuscript is G 761 (P. Jackson, "The *Vitas Patrum* in eleventh-century Worcester," in *England in the Eleventh Century*, 120–8). The *Vitas Patrum* also appears in two monastic booklists, "Booklists," nos. VIII and XIII.

¹¹⁹ "Booklists," no. X, but also VIII and XIII.

¹²⁰ Gneuss, "Anglo-Saxon libraries," 652. It is interesting to note that 120 manuscripts are extant from the seventh and eighth centuries, but only ten from the ninth (674).

¹²¹ Brooks, *Early History*, 273; D. Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History of Late Anglo-Saxon England: Four Studies* (Woodbridge, 1992), 32).

¹²² R. Gameson, "St Wulfstan, the library of Worcester and the spirituality of the medieval book," in *St Wulfstan and His World*, 61).

moving his see from Crediton to Exeter in 1050, Leofric apparently set about improving the quality of the library there. While it is possible Exeter had a productive scriptorium as early as the late tenth century, Leofric's actions speak against it.¹²³ We are told that he brought sixty-six books to Exeter after finding the library there inadequate, and while some must have been liturgical books, Leofric also provided many of the exegetical and devotional works discussed above. These included the works of Boethius, Gregory, Porphyry, Prudentius, Isidore, Caelius Sedulius, Arator, Smaragdus, Statius and Amalarius of Metz.¹²⁴ How Leofric procured all of these texts remains a tantalizing mystery, but because a handful survive, it is possible to discern something of Leofric's methodology. Unsurprisingly, paleographical evidence suggests that he turned to the two houses at Canterbury for a considerable number, including possibly Amalarius, Cassian, Boethius, Persius, Isidore and Gregory.¹²⁵ Several others localized only to southern England, such as the Exeter Book of poetry, may also have come from Canterbury scriptoria.¹²⁶ The collection of Wulfstan material Leofric acquired came from early eleventh-century Worcester, while it has recently been argued that the bishop acquired one of his texts, a tenth century penitential collection, from the see of Dorchester, whose library was heretofore completely obscure.¹²⁷ A number of manuscripts written on the Continent were acquired either directly from these scriptoria or through English intermediaries. The Leofric Missal, for example, was written in Northern France, but Leofric probably acquired it from Glastonbury.¹²⁸ Some, like the Breton Gospel-book, Leofric may have brought with him from the Continent.¹²⁹ Elaine Drage makes an interesting suggestion, though, that some of these books might have come to Leofric as gifts from the elite clergy and laity who attended his installation as bishop of Exeter in 1050.¹³⁰ Other texts in the list, for which no manuscripts survive, were doubtless procured in similar fashion. The existence of a large mid eleventh-century St Augustine's manuscript containing many texts suitable for education certainly makes the possibility that Exeter's copies of Sedulius and Arator were acquired there more likely.¹³¹

To supplement this collection, Leofric also set Exeter scribes to working on other volumes whose exemplars came from a variety of scriptoria. Drage traces the exemplar of the bilingual rule of Chrodegang to Winchester, while the manuscript of Gregory the Great's Old English *Pastoral Care* was apparently copied

¹²³ See Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter*, chapter 3, but then Wormald, *Making of English Law*, chapter 4 n. 240.

¹²⁴ The best versions are "Booklists," no. X and Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter*, Appendix V.

¹²⁵ G 174, 528, 533, 534, 590.

¹²⁶ G 257, 39, 258, 506 and 568. Drage believes that 257, 506 and 568 were acquired from Canterbury at the same time (Drage, "Bishop Leofric," 234). G 537, an early eleventh-century copy of the works of Prudentius, cannot be localized at all.

¹²⁷ G 59 and 592; J. Blair, "Estate memoranda of c. 1070 from the see of Dorchester-on-Thames," *EHR* 116 (2001), 114–23.

¹²⁸ G 575, 607. The Leofric Missal is G 585.

¹²⁹ G 530. Drage, "Bishop Leofric," 233.

¹³⁰ Drage, "Bishop Leofric," 235.

¹³¹ G 12.

from a late ninth century exemplar (or copy) probably obtained from Bishop Herman of Ramsbury before 1058.¹³² Finally, a collectar, like several other service books made for bishops in mid eleventh-century England, appears to have been based on a Lotharingian exemplar.¹³³

Altogether the evidence from Exeter demonstrates some of the methods Leofric employed to establish what he considered a viable cathedral library. These included acquiring texts from scriptoria across the kingdom, particularly Canterbury, donating books he probably brought with him from the Continent or which he procured from Continental centers during his pontificate, and, if Drage is correct, attracting the donations of gifts from friends lay and ecclesiastical. He set his own scribes to filling in the gaps, borrowing exemplars from many of these same scriptoria. It is impossible to judge, without similar evidence from other cathedral libraries, how exceptional a bishop Leofric was in mid eleventh-century England. One gets the impression from his activities at Exeter – establishing the communal life in his cathedral, acquiring an enviable library and working to restore the see's patrimony – that he was perhaps more dedicated than most. If scholars could cast more light into the dark recesses of late Anglo-Saxon libraries, however, the situation might appear very different. St Cuthbert's community at Durham, for instance, must have possessed more than the half-dozen books, none of which are strictly liturgical, whose provenance has been attributed to it.¹³⁴ Likewise, virtually nothing survives from the library and scriptorium at York, which was destroyed by William the Conqueror in 1069. So while the extant corpus can paint a picture of the cultural life of a community where particular books are known to have lived, the opposite is not true. The lack of survival of any books associated with the see of North Elmham tells us absolutely nothing – positive or negative – about the attitudes of its bishops or clergy toward learning and pastoral care.¹³⁵ Yet historians have often argued from the silence or have allowed the views of post-Conquest historians to fill in the gaps. It is worth keeping in mind that, in his survey of scribal activity in the aftermath of the Conquest, Richard Gameson argues that the Normans did not reject what they found in English libraries but merely revised in some places and supplemented in others. The so-called “modernization” of English libraries, characterized by a greater interest in patristics, generally came at the end of the century, and it was a universal rather than Norman trend.¹³⁶

The idealism of the prescriptive evidence, together with the anticlericalism of post-Conquest sources, has, until recently, also shaped modern attitudes toward the use of the vernacular in the late Anglo-Saxon Church. If one believes that

¹³² G 60 and 14, respectively. Drage, 269–70. The Gregory manuscript bears King Alfred's greeting to Wulfsgie, the ninth-century bishop of Sherborne.

¹³³ G 431. Cf. G 104, “The Portiforium of St Wulfstan” and G 400, the “Giso Sacramentary.” Drage, “Bishop Leofric,” 237–9.

¹³⁴ G 11, 122f, 327, 612 and 686.

¹³⁵ For a brief discussion of issues surrounding the survival of texts, including the role of early modern book collecting, see Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 2–3.

¹³⁶ At least one interested observer, the Flemish monk Goscelin of St Bertin, thought Normans were “ignorant upstarts” (quoted in Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 6).

quality pastoral care could only be dispensed in Latin, and not in the vernacular, then it is reasonable to argue that the Anglo-Saxons fell far short of the mark. Indeed, by the early eleventh century, many of the basic texts were available as original vernacular compositions, such as Ælfric's *Homilies*, or translations, such as those undertaken by Alfred the Great and his ecclesiastical coterie, or with substantial English glosses. Bishop Æthelwold defended the use of the vernacular in a sacred context, writing that "it certainly cannot matter by what language a man is acquired and drawn to the true faith, so long as he come to God."¹³⁷ The importance of monks and priests "getting it right" is the reason that Byrhtferth of Ramsey, so he tells us, composed a vernacular commentary to accompany a Latin computus.¹³⁸ There is no doubt from the extant manuscript evidence that Ælfric's *Homilies* were a cornerstone in the effort to provide better pastoral care in late Anglo-Saxon England. Together with the anonymous homilies in the Blickling and Vercelli collections, and the corpus of Christian vernacular poetry, Ælfric's *Homilies*, and to a lesser extent Wulfstan's, provided a solid grounding in the fundamentals of the faith, scriptural exegesis, moral living and the proper conduct of the liturgy. That Latin was not a prerequisite for the dissemination of the core beliefs of the Christian faith can only mean that the message was getting through to a much greater audience than it otherwise might. As Jonathan Wilcox has brilliantly argued, Ælfric's homilies were particularly well suited to serving a variety of pastoral contexts, including monastic, because his explications of Gospel pericopes amounted to one-stop shopping for local priests who did not have access to a full complement of books. Far from being a sign of decay, they reflect a concerted effort on the part of the Church, through the voice of one particularly articulate and interested monk, to meet the needs of priests, who, because of the fracturing minster system, often found themselves on their own. Wilcox is right to call this a "universal system of preaching."¹³⁹ Because Ælfric's homilies continued to be copied after the Conquest *in toto* or in excerpts, it seems reasonable that they accomplished their purpose.¹⁴⁰

In addition to original compositions, glosses, rubrics and translations further evidence the versatility of Old English in extending the access of the clergy to core texts. As Robert Stanton has shown, Old English glosses, which predate full-blown translations, paved the way for a vibrant vernacular literary culture. He writes: "in introducing new vocabulary and in calling attention to the basic differences between English and Latin syntax, glosses set up a pattern of interlingual correspondence that helped define the structure of the relatively new written language."¹⁴¹ All kinds of liturgical, exegetical, devotional and educational texts were glossed, but of extant manuscripts, the psalter and Aldhelm's

¹³⁷ C&S, 151–2, in R. M. Liuzza, "Religious prose," in *Companion*, 238.

¹³⁸ Bullough, "The educational tradition," 486.

¹³⁹ J. Wilcox, "Ælfric in Dorset and the landscape of pastoral care," in *Pastoral Care*, 59–61.

¹⁴⁰ See below, 112–13.

¹⁴¹ Stanton, *Culture of Translation*, 13. Some twenty Latin/Old English glossaries are extant (G 13, 45, 56, 115, 319, 326, 331, 336, 360, 377, 414, 436, 541, 555, 686, 775, 807 and 824).

prose *De virginitate* were among the most often glossed.¹⁴² Like glosses, Old English rubrics allowed for better performance where they occurred in liturgical books, such as the Red Book of Darley. As Helen Gittos has remarked, the weight of evidence suggests that “Old English was a perfectly respectable language for the rubrics of the liturgy and even on occasion for the liturgy itself.”¹⁴³ It was, after all, essential that the laity understood the promises that they were making in rituals such as confirmation.

The prodigious output of vernacular translations has also been interpreted as a sign of the degeneracy of Latin learning. Vernacular translations of core Christian texts, including the Alfredian translations discussed above, parts of the Old and New Testaments, legendaries, hymnals, martyrologies, works of history and medicine, and the rules of St Benedict and Chrodegang all speak to the ability of Old English to communicate the Christian experience, and not just to the secular clergy. Vernacular translations were made at various Anglo-Saxon scriptoria, including Winchester, Exeter and perhaps St Paul’s, but none approached the preservation of ecclesiastical texts in Old English with the fervor of St Wulfstan’s Worcester.¹⁴⁴ It is worth noting, however, that Wells Cathedral currently possesses a pre-Conquest copy of the *Rule* of St Benedict in the vernacular, although the provenance of the manuscript is as yet unknown.¹⁴⁵ It would be interesting indeed if the manuscript has been at Wells all along.

Both translations and glossed manuscripts defy easy classification as either classroom texts or library books. The tendency has been to attribute them to the realm of education, but it has recently been suggested that both were used for private reading as well as instruction. Gernot Wieland argues convincingly, for instance, that even monks who possessed a solid foundation in Latin grammar would have needed glosses to read Prudentius’s *Psychomachia*, which contains a variety of rhetorical devices as well as difficult Latin morphology and syntax.¹⁴⁶ Copies of the *Rule* of St Benedict and the *Regularis concordia* were also glossed at Christ Church, Canterbury, in the mid eleventh century, and not necessarily for classroom use.¹⁴⁷ The fact that texts were also being glossed in other reformed monastic communities suggests that the vernacular played some sort of role in the

¹⁴² Of the thirty-seven complete, nearly complete or fragmentary psalters, ten have an interlinear gloss throughout and two bear substantial glossing (M. Gretsche, “The Roman psalter, its Old English glosses, and the English Benedictine reform,” in *Liturgy*, 13); eight out of twelve copies of Aldhelm are glossed (G 93, 458, 464, 466, 613, 707, 806 and 857). For glosses in general, see Stanton, *Culture of Translation*, ch. 1 and P. Pulsiano, “Prayers, glosses and glossaries,” in *Companion*, 213–30. See also M. Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: ‘Grammatica’ and Literary Theory 350–1100* (Cambridge, 1994).

¹⁴³ H. Gittos, “Is there any evidence for the liturgy of parish churches in late Anglo-Saxon England? The Red Book of Darley and the status of Old English,” in *Pastoral Care*, 81. For the suggestion that Ælfric also produced vernacular rubrics as part of a larger program, see *idem*, 81–2.

¹⁴⁴ R. Gameson, “Book production and decoration at Worcester in the tenth and eleventh centuries,” in *St Oswald*, 217–23.

¹⁴⁵ G 78.

¹⁴⁶ G. Wieland, “The glossed manuscript: classbook or library book?” *ASE* 14 (1985), 160. See also P. O’Neill, “Latin learning at Winchester in the early eleventh century: the evidence of the Lambeth Psalter,” *ASE* 20 (1991), 162–3.

¹⁴⁷ G 363 contains glossed copies of both texts.

intellectual lives of English monks.¹⁴⁸ It is worth recalling in this context that Bishop Æthelwold translated the *Rule* of St Benedict and the monks of New Minster produced a vernacular translation of the *Regularis concordia* in the early eleventh century. It is hard to imagine that any of the adult monks of Winchester could not read Latin, but it may be that we have overestimated the Latinity of monks in general. Æthelwold's preface to the translation certainly hints at the existence of monks, particularly those who took the habit late in life, who were Latin-challenged.¹⁴⁹ But Anglo-Saxon schools would also have attracted students who were not destined for the religious life, complicating the picture even further. Malcolm Godden has rightly remarked that "there would always have been a continuous scale of Latinity and learnedness which would not always have coincided with the scale from monks through secular clergy to laity."¹⁵⁰

In the end, quality is in the eye of the beholder. Recent studies have argued persuasively for the originality and erudition of the vernacular program. About the quality of glosses, for example, Mechthild Gretsch has written that they "often aim to reproduce the poetic or extravagant, hermeneutic quality of the lemmata they translate."¹⁵¹ Robert Stanton has observed that "Alfred and Ælfric, the two great figures of Anglo-Saxon translation, both reveal a powerful mix of circumspection and ambition in the prefaces to their works, and a close reading of these prefaces enables us to see a confidence that was borne out in the ultimate efficacy and power of their English translations."¹⁵² Likewise, if Æthelwold was the author of the short text known as "Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries," and if he had intended it as a preface to his translation of the Benedictine Rule, as Gretsch argues, the similarities in structure and substance place him firmly in the Alfredian tradition of appreciating the power of the vernacular in a religious context.¹⁵³ At the end of the day, though, it matters far less what we moderns think about the proliferation of translations, glosses and original texts in Old English than the fact that contemporary churchmen, in particular bishops like Æthelwold and both Wulfstans, considered them an integral part of the effort to rejuvenate ecclesiastical life.

One reason for the skepticism of historians past and present is the apparent lack of a similar program anywhere on the Continent in the early Middle Ages. But the Anglo-Saxon Church was never out of contact with Churches on the Continent in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and while much work has yet to be done, Veronica Ortenberg's fine survey as well as individual studies, particularly of liturgical connections, have gone a long way toward demonstrating the breadth and depth of cultural interchange between England and the Continent.¹⁵⁴ Textual,

¹⁴⁸ Thorney had an Old English translation of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* (G 668), while Abingdon had one of Orosius (370). Bath possessed a copy of the Gospels in Old English (G 44), St Augustine's *Hexateuch* (G 315).

¹⁴⁹ Gretsch, "The Benedictine Rule," 131–58.

¹⁵⁰ Godden, *CH*, xxvii.

¹⁵¹ Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, 426.

¹⁵² Stanton, *Culture of Translation*, 3.

¹⁵³ Gretsch, "The Benedictine Rule," 149.

¹⁵⁴ Ortenberg, *English Church*; Wormald, "Æthelwold," 13–42; C. A. Jones, "A liturgical miscellany in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190," *Traditio* 54 (1999), 103–40.

artistic, architectural and other connections abound, but only the most relevant can be considered here. One of the most important liturgical connections is evidenced by the existence of at least seven whole or fragmentary copies of Amalarius of Metz' *Liber officialis*, the premier (if controversial) Continental interpretation of the liturgy.¹⁵⁵ A source widely used by Ælfric, Wulfstan and others, it perhaps arrived in England, as David Dumville has suggested, in the luggage of Breton clerics fleeing the Vikings.¹⁵⁶ The text's importance is further evidenced by the existence of a beautifully decorated copy from St Augustine's, "one of the most attractive English manuscripts of the period."¹⁵⁷

That the English Church remained receptive to Continental liturgical developments in the eleventh century is borne out by the adoption of some parts of the Romano-German Pontifical. It used to be thought that the text, "one of the chief intellectual achievements of the Ottonian Renaissance," was a very late arrival to Anglo-Saxon England, but, as chapter 2 argued, the pontifical was probably brought back from the Rhineland by Archbishop Ealdred, who had spent the year 1054 in Cologne.¹⁵⁸ Parts of the pontifical may, however, have been in circulation much earlier. Alicia Corrêa's analysis of the confirmation rite in the late tenth-century Sidney Sussex Pontifical points to the compiler's familiarity with the source-text of the PRG.¹⁵⁹ Likewise, David Rollason has argued that one Anglo-Saxon *ordo* for the dedication of a church was derived from it, while Christopher Jones has detected its influence on the rites for Maundy Thursday and the Chrism Mass in one of Archbishop Wulfstan's manuscripts.¹⁶⁰ At the same time, German collectars, tropers and passionals all probably made their way into England and were dispersed by means of a fairly steady stream of German and Lotharingian-born bishops beginning with Theodred of London (c. 942).¹⁶¹ If we add the influence of German iconography, in terms of both the ruler portraits discussed in chapter 2 and a renewed devotion to iconographic representations of the Cross, Jesus and Mary, all of which are addressed in Ortenberg's survey, it is clear that England participated in a constellation of ecclesiastical developments emanating from this part of the Continent.

The interplay between English monks and French and Flemish monks also resulted in the exchange of ideas. In terms of English reform, scholars continue to debate whether monks of Ghent, associated with Archbishop Dunstan, or monks of Fleury, associated with Æthelwold, exercised greater influence. The former participated in the Council of Winchester in 970, but Æthelwold typically gets the

¹⁵⁵ G 40e, 59e, 61, 73e, 174, 394e, 925e. McKitterick, *Frankish Church*, 149–54; "Booklists," no. X.55 and XIII.24.

¹⁵⁶ D. Dumville, "Breton and English manuscripts of Amalarius's *Liber officialis*," in *Mélanges François Kerlouégan*, ed. D. Conso, N. Fick, and B. Poulle (Paris, 1984), 205–14.

¹⁵⁷ Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History*, 116.

¹⁵⁸ Above, 54.

¹⁵⁹ A. Corrêa, "The liturgical manuscripts of Oswald's houses," in *St Oswald*, 302–3.

¹⁶⁰ D. Rollason, *Two Anglo-Saxon Rituals: The Dedication of a Church and the Judicial Ordeal*, Brixworth Lecture 5 (Brixworth, 1988), 10–11 and C. A. Jones, "The Chrism Mass in later Anglo-Saxon England," in *Liturgy*, 115.

¹⁶¹ Duduc (1033) and Giso (1060) of Wells, Herman of Ramsbury (1045), Walter of Hereford (1060) and Leofric of Exeter (1042).

credit, on the more authoritative word of Ælfric.¹⁶² English ecclesiastics were constantly in Flanders and France in the tenth and eleventh centuries and played host to a variety of Flemish and French monks in England. As part of the reform effort, for instance, monks of Corbie were invited by Bishop Æthelwold to work with the monks of Abingdon on their chant, while Oswald himself spent two years at Fleury before becoming bishop.¹⁶³ Bishop Herman of Ramsbury spent several years in residence at St Bertin's, and when he returned he brought back Goscelin of St Bertin, the noted hagiographer. Likewise, Folcard of St Bertin joined Archbishop Ealdred's household, where he was commissioned to write the *Life of St John of Beverley*.¹⁶⁴ Bishops, abbots and monks visited French and Flemish abbeys on their way to Rome on pilgrimage, to pick up their pallia, to attend papal councils and to transact royal business. Michael Lapidge has also argued that two scholars active in England in the tenth century, Israel the Grammarian and Frithegod, were of Breton and Frankish origin, respectively.¹⁶⁵

In terms of Italian influences, English ecclesiastics made their way to Rome for a variety of reasons in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Most went on pilgrimage or to retrieve their pallia, but some attended papal councils. Bishops Duduc of Wells, Herman of Ramsbury, Ealdred of Worcester and Ulf of Dorchester all attended papal councils in Rheims, Rome and Vercelli around the year 1050 "so that they might inform the king," we are told, "what was decided there in the interests of Christendom."¹⁶⁶ In her study of outside influences on the English Church in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Ortenberg also has some interesting things to say about Italian, Byzantine and eastern influences on English attitudes toward the eremetical life, an appreciation for which was to develop more fully after the Conquest.¹⁶⁷

Even a brief review of the evidence for contact between the English Church and Continental churches undermines any argument that the English Church was completely out of step with Continental trends. C. H. Hohler's portrait of late-Saxon churchmen, even bishops and abbots, as beer-guzzling idiots who were "cut off from the general cultural heritage of the West" seems more than a little harsh.¹⁶⁸ Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastics were not, however, slavish followers of foreign fashion, liturgical or otherwise. Nor should we assume simply because English churchmen did not adopt this or that new trend that they were uninterested in them. Indeed, as Susan Rankin has shown in her analysis of music at post-Conquest Worcester, other concerns might have been guiding them. The

¹⁶² *LME*, preface.

¹⁶³ R. Marsden, "The Old Testament in late Anglo-Saxon England: preliminary observations on the textual evidence," in *The Early Medieval Bible. Its Production, Decoration and Use*, ed. R. Gameson (Cambridge, 1994), 108.

¹⁶⁴ *HCV*, I, 242.

¹⁶⁵ M. Lapidge, "Israel the Grammarian in Anglo-Saxon England," and "A Frankish scholar," in *Anglo-Latin Literature*, 87–104 and 157–81, respectively.

¹⁶⁶ *C&S*, no. 69; *ASC*, s.a. 1047 [*recte* 1050]. Papal legates returned to England with Ealdred in 1054 (*VSW*, i, 10).

¹⁶⁷ Ortenberg, *English Church*, 106–7 and 207.

¹⁶⁸ C. H. Hohler, "Some service-books of the later Saxon Church," in *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. D. Parsons (London, 1975), 71–4.

Worcester's community's lack of interest in the trendier heightened musical notation probably did reflect a certain conservatism on its part, which is consistent with other aspects of its cultural production, but at the same time she observes that the new form of notation required a great deal more parchment. For a community interested in keeping its costs down, taking its time to adopt new liturgical forms when the old ones were still perfectly useful must have made a lot of sense.¹⁶⁹ If the Church was idiosyncratic, it was only because of the enduring importance of its early traditions. Patrick Wormald has shown that the uneven course of the reform program in England makes sense only if it is understood as a return to Bede's Golden Age when the English Church was thoroughly monastic, or so it was believed.¹⁷⁰ Monastic cathedrals were an anomaly in the western Church, but they represented the Church of Augustine of Canterbury and his successors, at least as Bede preserved it for posterity. Tenth- and eleventh-century English ecclesiastics were powerfully aware of the past, but they were also sensitive to the present, and to the winds of change that blew, more often than not, from Germany. A synthesis of the best of the old and the new was indeed a hallmark of the Anglo-Saxon Church, beginning with Alfred and ending with the appointment of the Lotharingians by Edward the Confessor. Scholars have often failed to appreciate this. To quote Richard Pfaff,

The liturgical output and activities of the late Anglo-Saxon Church have been harshly judged as fumbling, insular, and backward looking, but the manuscript evidence supports a different view. Churchmen were receptive to Continental influences, and interwove these with local liturgical traditions to produce such original works as the benedictionals and the rites for royal consecration. That this original work was valued is shown by the fact that from England especially books were often taken to the Continent, especially after the Norman Conquest.¹⁷¹

The English Church may not have always been at the forefront of liturgical or theological change, but neither was England the ecclesiastical backwater some historians have imagined.

¹⁶⁹ S. Rankin, "Music at Wulfstan's cathedral," in *St Wulfstan and His World*, 221–2.

¹⁷⁰ Wormald, "Æthelwold," 38–41. See also Ortenberg, *English Church*, 183–4 and A. Maret-Crosby, "Mission et monastère: l'inspiration de Grégoire le Grand," in *l'Église et la Mission au VI^e Siècle: la Mission d'Augustin de Cantorbéry et les Églises de Gaule sous l'impulsion de Grégoire le Grand*, ed. C. de Dreuille (Paris, 2000), 76–87.

¹⁷¹ J. Nelson and R. Pfaff, "Pontificals and benedictionals," in *Liturgical Books*, 98.

Pastoral Care

WHETHER monastic or secular, the English Church was founded for the purpose of saving souls, and the cathedral was, in theory, the epicenter of pastoral activity. It is thus more than a little ironic that the two chapters about cathedral culture and pastoral care are the shortest. If it is difficult to nail down the elements of cathedral culture, it is even harder to glimpse diocesans at work in a period before the advent of bishops' registers and other documents that reflect the rise of ecclesiastical bureaucracy in England. Contemporary sources reveal very little about the practice of pastoral care in the dioceses, and still less about the networks of relationships that characterized the Church at this level. The dearth of sources has led most scholars to assume that episcopal control over pastoral care was minimal in this period. Thus, "the striking lack of any focused interest in the supervision of local clergy or parish life in early eleventh-century tracts on the episcopal office," observes John Blair, "raises some doubts about how often bishops were in a position to confront such problems." While such doubts are not unreasonable, the recent collection of essays, *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, sheds much light on pastoral practices in this period, alleviating at least some of these doubts.¹ This chapter brings together the scattered evidence for pastoral care contained in prescriptive, narrative and, especially, liturgical sources. What this analysis will show is that while we will probably never know exactly what Christianity looked like everywhere on the ground, there is more that can be said about contemporary attitudes and expectations toward pastoral care in the dioceses of later Anglo-Saxon England.

On the eve of the Norman Conquest, the ecclesiastical landscape of England was a blend of rural and urban, small and large, central and peripheral. It still bore the imprint in 1066 of the Church's missionary origins, particularly in its diversity.² Given such notable differences in size, location, prosperity and influence, it is not possible to speak of a typical Anglo-Saxon bishopric. Most, however, were rural and relatively poor, and more than a few vied continually with powerful local monasteries for resources both human and financial.³ The two primatial sees, Canterbury and York, shared jurisdiction over the kingdom, although the archbishop of Canterbury was the undisputed metropolitan in the Anglo-Saxon

¹ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 495. Tinti, *Pastoral Care*, *passim*.

² See Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 65–78.

³ Only bishops of Rochester, Selsey and the western sees worked in "monk-free zones."

period and the number of sees it supervised was much greater.⁴ Both bishops were undeniably powerful, as chapter 2 demonstrated, but Canterbury was much wealthier, and until Ealdred was forced by the Pope to give it up in 1061, he, like many of his predecessors, held the see of Worcester in plurality to bolster the relatively meager revenues of the northern archbishopric.⁵ The thirteen other sees in existence on the eve of the Conquest – Winchester, London, Rochester, Dorchester, North Elmham, Selsey, Sherborne, Exeter, Wells, Hereford, Lichfield, Worcester and Durham – were a study in contrasts.⁶ Some, like Dorchester and Lichfield, controlled large dioceses encompassing several shires, while others, such as Selsey and Wells, encompassed only one. Rochester was unique in that it shared responsibility for just one with the archbishop of Canterbury. Geography, however, only tells part of the story because it does not reflect the Church on the ground. Coverage must have been quite diverse from one part of the kingdom to another: over 700 churches and chapels are recorded for the diocese of Thetford (formerly North Elmham) in Domesday Norfolk and Suffolk; Worcester had only about 150 at the same, and Hereford sixty to seventy.⁷ Likewise, the differences between the Christian experience on either side of the Humber were probably very significant indeed. It is worth reiterating, however, that because it is primarily prescriptive and liturgical, the evidence for pastoral care in tenth- and eleventh-century England provides very little sense of the Church's diversity on the ground. As a result, it often raises more questions than it can answer.

The Rites Reserved to Bishops

While it was envisioned as a community in every sense of the word, the cathedral was by no means a democracy. The *OEERC* provides for a hierarchical community in which the bishop's word was law. Obedience to the bishop was made synonymous with obedience to God in the sense that the bishop was the mediator of God's will.⁸ While he could delegate authority to archdeacons and provosts, the bishop was the final arbiter of conflict and the only person who could substantially alter the rules.⁹ The emphasis on hierarchy in the cathedral as opposed to monasteries reflects the bishop's canonical status vis-à-vis the diocese; the abbot, by contrast, was more of a *primus inter pares*. Cathedrals staffed by monks and

⁴ Brooks, *Early History*, 314–15. The archbishop of York's jurisdiction was north of the Humber, which generally meant York and Durham, and only occasionally Worcester (Barlow, *English Church* I, 232).

⁵ *GP*, §115.

⁶ For diocesan boundaries, see Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, 31–2.

⁷ Perhaps three-quarters of late medieval churches were already in existence in 1066 (Tinti, "Introduction," in *Pastoral Care*, 9); J. Campbell, "The East Anglian sees before the Conquest," in *Norwich Cathedral, Church, City and Diocese 1096–1996*, ed. I. Atherton, E. Fernie and C. Harper-Bill (London, 1996), 20–1; and J. Barrow, "The clergy in English dioceses c. 900–c. 1066," in *Pastoral Care*, 24–5. Regional variation in local church building is discussed in Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 417–22. See also R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989).

⁸ *OEERC*, c. 8. Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 145–9.

⁹ The bishop, for example, determined the length of each Office (*OEERC*, c. 13).

canons were, to be sure, liturgical communities, but as Martin Claussen has remarked, observance of the liturgy in Chrodegang's view was "an important task – a task, not the purpose – of such a community."¹⁰ Indeed, the version of Chrodegang's rule used in England is as much concerned with the conduct of the clergy outside the cathedral as it is with that of the canons. The last twenty-five of eighty-four chapters discuss the various grades of priests and how they should comport themselves in the world.¹¹

The *OEERC*, like the canonical material discussed so far, admittedly reflects the world as it ought to be, not necessarily how it was. Narrative sources are even less forthcoming about pastoral care. In his recent examination of the books used by Anglo-Saxon bishops, Richard Pfaff remarks that it is indeed a major historiographic limitation that the narrative sources, including episcopal *vitae* and the *Gesta Pontificum* of William of Malmesbury, which, as its name suggests, was principally concerned with the deeds of bishops, "pay almost no attention to how these men functioned in their liturgical roles as bishops."¹² Pfaff's analysis is therefore based on what he calls an "imaginative extrapolation" of the extant liturgical manuscripts and how they were used.¹³ We do, in fact, get closer to understanding the pastoral roles of bishops by considering the books specifically made for their use – pontificals and benedictionals. The former contain the *ordines* for rites only a bishop could perform, while the latter, which could be separate books or part of pontificals, contain the communion blessings specifically said by bishops.¹⁴ In addition, English Mass books could contain pontifical material.¹⁵ Only nineteen whole or fragmentary Anglo-Saxon pontificals survive, which, given the likelihood that approximately 120 bishops required them in the period 950 to 1100, is a salutary reminder of the limitations of manuscript evidence.¹⁶ Thanks to David Dumville's analysis of extant pontificals, however, it is possible to illuminate some of the processes by which these books were produced and distributed. Both Canterbury and York, he argues, made pontificals for new archiepiscopal incumbents. Based on the chronology of their production, Dumville matches extant tenth- and eleventh-century pontificals with seven southern and three northern archbishops.¹⁷ Five of these pontificals eventually ended up in the hands of diocesan bishops, leading Dumville to plausibly argue that when a bishop was promoted to archbishop, a new pontifical was made especially for him, freeing up his predecessor's copy to be given to another bishop. This is all speculative, but it is certainly a reasonable argument that the elevation of a prelate to the episcopate or archiepiscopate merited the production of a new pontifical, one of the symbols of his office. Extant copies have been also

¹⁰ Claussen, *Reform of the Frankish Church*, 70.

¹¹ *OEERC*, 13–14 and c. 56–84.

¹² R. Pfaff, *The Anglo-Saxon Bishop and His Book*, *BJRL* 81 (1999), 24.

¹³ The following discussion draws heavily from this remarkable example of how new ways of approaching the evidence can yield significant results.

¹⁴ Nelson and Pfaff, "Pontificals and benedictionals," 87–98.

¹⁵ The Giso Sacramentary (G 400), in Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 20–3.

¹⁶ Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 5–6.

¹⁷ Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History*, 88–94.

attributed to the sees of Worcester, Sherborne, Wells, Winchester, Exeter and the abbey of Ramsey.¹⁸

It is from these liturgical texts, and not the anecdotal narrative evidence, that we get most of our information about the sacramental duties of English bishops, which, from the earliest days of the Church, had included the ordination of clergy, the confirmation of children and adults, and the consecration of churches, altars and graveyards. These status-changing rites had been assigned specifically to bishops, although Ælfric suggests that it was less a spiritual issue than a practical one: “there is no further difference,” he writes, “between a mass-priest and a bishop except that a bishop is appointed to ordain priests and to confirm children and to watch over God’s dues, for it would be too manifold if every mass-priest did so.”¹⁹ Ælfric cannot seriously have meant to suggest that parish priests ought to be in the business of ordaining one another; he is probably only speaking of the intercessory power they shared as priests.²⁰ The significance of ordination is indicated by the fact that the *ordines* pertaining to the consecration of persons begin several pontificals.²¹ Only a bishop was supposed to ordain a priest and, according to a text associated with Archbishop Wulfstan, only after he was thoroughly examined as to his competence in the tenets of the faith, ministry and canon law.²² The text describes how the candidate was to present himself to the bishop one month in advance of ordination for the purposes of examination by a teacher selected by the bishop. The candidate was to explain his understanding of the faith and how he would convey it to others. He was further required to explain his understanding of baptism and “how he comprehends the symbolism of the Mass and also of other church services.” Finally, he was to demonstrate the extent of his knowledge of canon law and his ability to divide the liturgical year according to a *computus*. Once satisfied, the teacher apparently gave the candidate a token (*tacne*) to bring to the bishop to prove his suitability for ordination. We do not know where candidates were sent, although it stands to reason that some were educated and examined in cathedrals. The question also depends, to some extent, on the level of education available at late-Saxon minsters, which must have varied widely by the turn of the eleventh century.²³ In any case, the text makes further provisions for the ordination of a “half-educated man” when absolutely necessary. The teacher who presented him to the bishop in the first place was to take responsibility for making sure he was educated after the fact. In theory, then, the clergy were competently trained before they became priests. In practice, however, this was apparently not always the case, and Archbishop Wulfstan, or someone in his circle, devised a mechanism for dealing with it. One also imagines that in lieu of formal training, priests also learned the fundamentals of the faith from the homilies and sermons of Ælfric and Wulfstan.

¹⁸ Nelson and Pfaff, “Pontificals and benedictionals,” 88.

¹⁹ C&S, no. 40 §43.

²⁰ Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 254.

²¹ Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 11.

²² C&S, no. 57.

²³ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 492.

In a perfect world, priests had access to and were able to use a variety of books. This is what the pastoral letter of Ælfric of Eynsham, written on behalf of Bishop Wulfsgie of Sherborne, tells us when it lists the books priests needed to know (and presumably own) before they could be ordained. These included a psalter, a book of epistles, a Gospel-book and a Mass book, as well as an Easter table, a pastoral book, a penitential, and a “reading book.”²⁴ The list ends with a manual, which priests were to use for the occasional offices such as baptism, unction and burial. All of these books are extant with the exception of a manual, although there is textual evidence that manuals did exist in Anglo-Saxon England.²⁵ Books known to have been used by parish priests are very rare, for obvious reasons, but the so-called ‘Red Book of Darley,’ may be a service book once used by diocesan priests in Derbyshire. An incomplete missal, it contains rare vernacular *ordines* for baptism, the Visitation of the Sick and Extreme Unction, as well as a glossed Latin *ordo* for the burial of the dead.²⁶ Based on its quirky Latin text and Old English rubrics, this early eleventh-century book has been deemed unimpressive.²⁷ This does not necessarily rule out, however, the possibility that some of the more complex rituals, such as those associated with Candlemas, Easter and Rogationtide, were performed at the local level.²⁸ With so little to go on, the liturgical competency of the diocesan clergy must remain an open question. But Archbishop Wulfstan’s admonition to the clergy to have a book open in front of them while conducting the Mass, and to look at it when necessary, implies that the clergy did indeed have books even if they could not always recite the Mass from memory.²⁹

If determining the competence of late Anglo-Saxon bishops in canon law is extremely difficult, judging the competence of the diocesan clergy is virtually impossible. Carolingian canon law collections directed at diocesan clergy, however, are extant in at least five manuscripts. Among the most popular was that of Gerbald, bishop of Liège from 787 to 810, who touches on all aspects of pastoral care from the training and duties of diocesan priests to the care of churches and the prayers and rites that priests should teach the people.³⁰ All of the manuscripts are associated with bishops in some way; three probably belonged to eleventh-century bishops of Worcester, Sherborne and Crediton.³¹ Several other collections, including the *Excerptiones Pseudo-Egberti*, now generally attributed to Ælfric, and excerpts from *Admonitio Generalis* and *Instituto Canonicorum* of 816, were available, but it is unclear how widely they were disseminated.³² A

²⁴ C&S, no. 40.

²⁵ S. L. Keefer, “Manuals,” in *Liturgical Books*, 99–109. For the likelihood that priests possessed *libelli* rather than composite manuscripts, see Gittos, “Is there any evidence?” 64.

²⁶ G 111. R. Pfaff, “Massbooks,” in *Liturgical Books*, 21–2; Gittos, “Is there any evidence?” 63–74.

²⁷ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 492, n. 295.

²⁸ Gittos, “Is there evidence?” 65. See also Jones, “Two composite texts.”

²⁹ *Canons of Edgar* 32, in M. Godden, “King Alfred’s preface and the teaching of Latin in Anglo-Saxon England,” *EHR* 117 (2002), 598.

³⁰ Gerbald (G 73, 592, 879, 896, 922); also, Ansegisus, who was very influential on the Continent (G 73e, 629e).

³¹ G 73, 879 and 922, respectively.

³² G 59, 925 and 926. For Ælfric’s possible authorship of the *Excerptiones*, see J. E. Cross and A. Hamer,

more random collection of texts, including excerpts from Amalarius' *Liber officialis*, a tract on the duties of a priest, and a rhyming version of the Pater noster, a book with clear pastoral utility, was perhaps made at Worcester at the turn of the eleventh century.³³

This is not a lot of evidence, but it does show that texts whose primary concern was pastoral care at the diocesan level were being copied in English cathedral scriptoria in the eleventh century. So when a candidate was examined as to his competence in canon law, these were probably the texts from which his training was derived. Satisfied that a candidate was adequately prepared (and sometimes not even then), bishops performed the ritual of ordination contained in pontificals. The ceremony involved the bestowal of a stole, followed by the consecration blessing, anointing of the priest's head and hands, and vestment in the chasuble, all of which were followed by concluding prayers.³⁴ The cathedral must have been the intended venue for the consecration of a priest, since, as Richard Pfaff observes, the *ordo* for clerical consecration contains antiphons sung by a *scola*, or body of singers.³⁵ The consecration of other religious personnel, including fellow bishops, deacons, abbots, monks, nuns, virgins and widows, *ordines* and prayers for which appear in pontificals, probably also took place in cathedrals. There is not a lot of evidence for actual episcopal consecrations, even in *vitae*, but they must have been grand affairs.³⁶ Sources indicate that some bishops and abbots were consecrated in the presence of the *witan*, but it is not clear if this was a regular practice.³⁷ Even though the cathedral presented the most opportunity for religious splendor, liturgical evidence indicates that the clergy could also be ordained in other locations. The Sidney Sussex Pontifical, perhaps associated with the see of Durham, is a small, thirteen-folio book containing only *ordines* for the consecration of the lower clergy and priests followed by the confirmation of children. Alicia Corrêa remarks that, "its small size must have made it ideally suited for someone who was commuting around his diocese(s)."³⁸ At the same time, the liturgy for church consecration indicates that some bishops traveled with a small group of singers, which must mean that some of the pomp and circumstance of a cathedral ceremony could be mustered in the localities.³⁹

Just as clerical ordination was reserved to the episcopate because it changed

"Ælfric's letters and the *Excerptiones Ecgeberhti*," in *Alfred the Wise. Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. M. Godden, J. Roberts and J. Nelson (Cambridge, 1997), 5–13 and Wormald, "Archbishop Wulfstan and the holiness of society," 191–224.

³³ G 394.

³⁴ Corrêa, "Liturgical manuscripts," 301–2.

³⁵ Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 15–16.

³⁶ The only exception is Oswald's consecration (see above, 52). In most cases, the sources say only that so-and-so succeeded to the see. We are told, however, that Æthelric was consecrated bishop of Durham at York (ASC, s.a. 1041 (D)), while Bishop Wulfstan II was consecrated by Ealdred at York (VW, i, §12).

³⁷ Abbot Mannig of Evesham was elected and ordained at a synod held in August of 1044 in London (JW, s.a. 1044), while another abbot of Evesham, Æthelwig, was consecrated by Archbishop Ealdred at Gloucester in 1058 during the Easter meeting of the court (*Chronicon Ev.*, s.a. 1058). See also *Homilies of Wulfstan*, no. 17, which was composed for the consecration of a bishop.

³⁸ G 155; Corrêa, "Liturgical manuscripts," 300.

³⁹ Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 16.

the inward character of the candidate, so too was the status-changing right of confirmation.⁴⁰ This sacrament was administered at some point after a person's baptism, which was typically the responsibility of ordinary clergy, although bishops, as chief priests of the dioceses, could and did perform both rites. Baptism, which made a Christian out of the individual, was, in a sense, completed by confirmation, which in Christian doctrine is believed to impress a new and permanent character on the candidate. He or she receives the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit – wisdom, understanding, counsel, spiritual strength, knowledge, piety and the fear of God – all of which were meant to make the recipient more receptive to the workings of the Holy Spirit and the grace of God. In Ælfric's words, "bishops are in the same office in God's Church [as the apostles], and they keep the institution in their bishoping, so that they set their hands over baptized men and pray that the almighty Ruler will send to them the seven fold gifts of his Ghost."⁴¹ The liturgical evidence for confirmation is limited to three extant pontificals, but variations in the *ordines* point to different rituals for children and adults.⁴² The rite in the so-called Egbert Pontifical, which is titled *confirmatio hominum*, has the bishop anointing the adult confirmand's forehead with chrism and reciting a formula before he or she takes communion. In the Sidney Sussex Pontifical, which is specific to *pueri*, the rite does not take place during the Mass; the bishop lays his hand on the candidate's head, lists the seven gifts of the holy spirit, makes the sign of a cross and announces the child's name.⁴³ The Mass, it seems, was only suitable as a context for adult confirmation. The evidence contained in pontificals, although slight, is especially important because extra-liturgical evidence is sorely lacking. Few as they are, recorded instances of actual confirmations generally appear only in hagiography, and therefore present interpretive problems. The *Life of St Æthelwold*, for instance, contains a slightly humorous account of one confirmation over which the saint presided, in which the deacon lost the flask of chrism on the way to the church.⁴⁴ Later, William of Malmesbury praised Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester's ability to confirm several thousand children in a day, but given the mechanics of the rite, this seems like an exaggeration.⁴⁵

Although it was a spiritual rite of passage, confirmation was also a significant event in a person's life in the early Middle Ages because it was probably one of the few opportunities ordinary Christians had to be in the presence of a bishop unless a church was consecrated in their town or village. According to the canons, each bishop was supposed to "take great care that the churches of God within his parish be well built, repaired and adorned, as well in the edifice and lights, as in

⁴⁰ The word for "unconfirmed" in the *Canons of Edgar* is "*unbiscopad*" (*Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar*, ed. Fowler, c. 15; J. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship* (Ithaca, 1998), 102).

⁴¹ Godden, *CH*, I, no. 22. Bedingfield, *Dramatic Liturgy*, 217. Cf. *Homilies of Wulfstan*, no. 9.

⁴² Gneuss, "Liturgical books," R.4 and 14 and G 914 (Corrêa, "Liturgical manuscripts," 303). In the early church, confirmation was conferred immediately after baptism.

⁴³ G 155. Corrêa notes that the listing of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit differentiates the *ordo* for confirmation from that of baptism (Corrêa, "Liturgical manuscripts," 304). See also G 914.

⁴⁴ *VSÆ*, §32.

⁴⁵ *VSW*, ii, §14. For a discussion of the physical impossibilities, see Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 19.

the other furniture.”⁴⁶ There is no evidence that bishops routinely inspected churches, although the more diligent among them may have made appropriate arrangements. Only a bishop, however, was supposed to consecrate churches. Over the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries, English bishops must have been kept increasingly busy by this third and final status-changing rite. John Blair has demonstrated in his recent survey of the changing ecclesiastical landscape how large mother-parishes were gradually fragmenting from the mid tenth century onward into smaller local parishes, particularly in eastern and south eastern England. This process of “cellularization” was characterized by the proliferation of small churches, most of which were proprietary, and all of which had to be duly consecrated by the diocesan bishop.⁴⁷ Only he could make an ordinary building into a house of God, although a famous story in the *Life of St Wulfstan* wherein the saint refuses to consecrate a manorial church until the owner cuts down a nearby tree suggests some churches were used without the benefit of consecration.⁴⁸ The dedication of a church was an important moment in the spiritual and social life of a community, not to mention an extraordinary display of episcopal authority, and extant descriptions of the ritual point to its dramatic quality. David Rollason has described the ritual in some detail: bishop and clergy vested outside the church, twelve candles were lit and the group processed around the church three times, chanting a litany.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, a deacon entered the church. The bishop then knocked on the door with his crozier, saying “Lift up your heads, you gates, lift yourselves up, you everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in”; the deacon then responded, “Who then is the king of glory?” The sequence was repeated two more times before the deacon finally opened the door for the crowd. At this point the bishop proceeded to trace two alphabets on the floor from corner to corner before exorcising and blessing a mixture of salt, water, ashes and wine, which he sprinkled on the altar, floor and walls, inside and out. Next came the blessing of the altar, walls, font and other items to be used in the church. Once the church and vessels had been consecrated, the relics and the place where they were to be kept were blessed in similarly dramatic fashion, and the ritual ended with the celebration of the first Mass in the church, including a sermon.⁵⁰ The centrality of this ritual is implied in a miniature depicting a church dedication that was included in the *Benedictional of Æthelwold*. The only pastoral image amid some thirty images depicting events in the life of Christ and his saints, it implies the assimilation of the body of believers to the building, and the bishop to the altar.⁵¹ The Lanalet Pontifical, thought to belong to an early eleventh-century bishop of Wells, also contains an illustration

⁴⁶ WCLC, B.29. Rollason, *Two Anglo-Saxon Rituals*, 7.

⁴⁷ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, especially chapter 7.

⁴⁸ VSW, ii, §17. Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 382 and 496. Priests were fined for celebrating Mass in unconsecrated churches in the northern dioceses (C&S, no. 63 §13).

⁴⁹ Rollason, *Two Anglo-Saxon Rituals*, 8–9.

⁵⁰ Cf. VSAE, §25.

⁵¹ Deshaman, *Benedictional*, 141–2.

of this ceremony, as well as rubrics that suggest the rite was accompanied by music.⁵²

Unlike most episcopal duties in the dioceses, church consecrations appear relatively frequently in narrative sources, particularly *vitae*. Among the most often reported are the churches that bishops founded or rebuilt themselves and then consecrated, in addition to work they did on their own churches that resulted in rededications. Bishop Æthelwold's *vita* is particularly concerned with his building efforts on behalf of the monastic church. Here we are told that he rebuilt and dedicated the Old Minster at Winchester as well as churches at Peterborough, Thorney and Ely.⁵³ Wulfstan II of Worcester also rebuilt his cathedral church, somewhat remorsefully tearing down the church of St Oswald and constructing a new one in its place.⁵⁴ Archbishop Ealdred, who built buildings for communal living at various minsters in his dioceses, also rebuilt the abbey of Gloucester, dedicating it to St Peter.⁵⁵ Dedications such as these could be very grand affairs. The rededication of the Old Minster at Winchester in 980 was, for example, a cause for great celebration. According to Æthelwold's hagiographer, "it received a solemn and splendid dedication from nine bishops . . . and there were present King Æthelred and virtually all the ealdormen, abbots, thegns and leading noblemen of the whole race of the English. For two days they celebrated the dedication in all joy."⁵⁶ The translation of St Oswald's relics in 1084, which occurred after Wulfstan rebuilt the cathedral at Worcester, was similarly attended by Bishop Robert of Hereford, many abbots, and *multorum populorum*.⁵⁷

Dedications on behalf of the nobility could be even grander because they celebrated the power of the family as well as the authority of the Church. The dedication of Cnut's victory church at Ashingdon in 1020 was doubtless performed in high style by Archbishop Wulfstan of York and a host of bishops and noblemen.⁵⁸ But the account of the dedication of Harold's church at Waltham Holy Cross is the clearest indication that the combination of clerical and comital interests often resulted in the grandest of celebrations. Guests included King Edward and the earl's sister, Queen Edith; the celebrant, Archbishop Cynsige of York (the see of Canterbury was vacant); eleven bishops and an equal number of abbots; and all of the leading laymen of the kingdom. The celebration, we are told, which included the "choicest food and drink," lasted eight days, and "great bowls full of wine and mead were placed at the cross roads so that any travellers who wished could take their fill."⁵⁹ Like royal consecrations, such magnificent displays of religious authority bolstered the Church's image, but the intangible benefit to the family hosting the party must have been equally as great. Even on a much smaller scale,

⁵² Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History*, 92 and 117 and Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 12–16.

⁵³ *VSÆ*, §40, 23–73; *LE*, ii, 10.

⁵⁴ *VSW*, iii, 10.

⁵⁵ *JW*, s.a. 1058.

⁵⁶ *VSÆ*, §40.

⁵⁷ *VSW*, iii, §10. Cf. the celebration surrounding the dedication of the new church at Durham and the translation of the relics of St Cuthbert (*LDE*, iii, §4).

⁵⁸ *JW*, s.a. 1020; *ASC*, s.a. 1020 (CD).

⁵⁹ *Waltham Chronicle*, c. 16.

the ownership of a church was a weapon in the arsenal of social climbers everywhere.⁶⁰

The richness of the *Waltham Chronicle*'s description of the dedication is unmatched elsewhere in the sources. Most often, they mention only that a dedication has taken place. Thus we know that in the tenth century Ælfheah of Winchester dedicated a church on the outskirts of the city in the company of his young kinsman and future archbishop, Dunstan, who would eventually consecrate Edith's church at Wilton and doubtless many others.⁶¹ Archbishop Oswald, along with Bishop Æscwig of London, consecrated Ramsey Abbey on behalf of Ealdorman Æthelwine in 991.⁶² Some of the splendor pertaining to Waltham's dedication must also have been in evidence here. In the eleventh century, Bishop Wulfwig of Dorchester consecrated proprietary churches in Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire, while Bishop Æthelric of Durham dedicated the thegn Copsig's church of St Germanus at Marske.⁶³ Epigraphical evidence is the only record of Archbishop Ealdred's consecration of Odda's chapel at Deerhurst, while Wulfstan II's *vita* mentions half a dozen churches he consecrated.⁶⁴ Because none of the sources in which these notices survive was even remotely concerned to provide a comprehensive record of dedications, the evidence is necessarily anecdotal. It does, however, show bishops from both the tenth and eleventh centuries and from sees about which we have very little information, such as Dorchester, consecrating churches on behalf of clergy and laymen, from the highest to the lowest of the landowning classes.

The proliferation of local churches brought with it the need for episcopal consecration of graveyards as well, but because liturgical evidence for this rite is extant only from the 970s, it is not clear when the practice began. As John Blair observes, by the tenth century "it was becoming unacceptable for Christians to be buried in their back yards, on hills, or in ancient barrows and earthworks."⁶⁵ Cemetery consecrations, although not as dramatic as church consecrations, preserved some of the same symbolism in the manner in which the bishop walked the perimeter of the graveyard while intoning prayers for the dead as well as those who had yet to die.⁶⁶ The evidence for actual graveyard consecrations is meager, but one of Dunstan's *vitae* records that he gave the monks of Glastonbury a peaceful place to rest by closing their cemetery off to foot traffic.⁶⁷ Given the

⁶⁰ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 393 and 400.

⁶¹ *VSD*, 14.

⁶² Tuesday (*recte* Sunday), the 8th of November, to be exact (JW, s.a. 991).

⁶³ DB, i, 215r; *The Cartulary of the Abbey of Eynsham*, ed. H. E. Salter, i (Oxford, 1906–7), 109; *LDE*, iii, §14.

⁶⁴ *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art, 966–1066*, ed. J. Backhouse, D. Turner and L. Webster (London, 1984), no. 138; *VSW*, ii, §17, 21, and iii, §15. Wulfstan's biography also refers to the dedication of altars, which must also have been common (*VSW*, i, §14; ii, §9, 15; iii, §14; Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, 164–5).

⁶⁵ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 465. See also D. M. Hadley and J. Buckberry, "Caring for the dead in late Anglo-Saxon England," in *Pastoral Care*, 121–47.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* See also H. Gittos, "Creating the sacred: Anglo-Saxon rites for consecrating cemeteries," in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. S. Lucy and A. Reynolds (London, 2002), 195–208.

⁶⁷ *VSD*, 16, ed. Thomson and Winterbottom, in Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 465 n.

constraints on a bishop's time, it is reasonable to assume, as liturgical evidence suggests, that church and cemetery dedications went hand in hand with confirmations. Two homilies for the dedication of a church added to the Pontifical of Dunstan in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries attest to the fact that these events were also prime opportunities to preach rousing sermons on the fundamentals of the faith and the wages of sin.⁶⁸ The liturgy for consecration doubtless served a purpose beyond that for which it was created, for in this liturgy the bishop's local authority was made manifest in an intensely dramatic way.

In addition to the rites described above, pontificals contain additional prayers and blessings specific to a bishop, such as the Maundy Thursday purification of the oils used in baptism, consecration and other rituals. Chrism was blessed on this day because, as Ælfric tells us, "on that day the Lord passed down to his disciples the sacraments of the Church."⁶⁹ Three separate oils were blessed during the Chrism Mass, but as Christopher Jones has recently shown, there was some confusion, then as now, as to the proper use of each. Ælfric apparently got it right that three separate oils were to be used: one for anointing the sick (*oleum infirmorum*), a second for anointing catechumens and performing exorcisms (*oleum sanctam*), and a third for anointing the baptized, ordaining priests and monarchs, and consecrating churches (*oleum crismatis*).⁷⁰ Contemporary practice, including that of Archbishop Wulfstan, may have conflated the two baptismal oils, calling both chrism, prompting Ælfric to clarify the situation in a somewhat strident manner. Jones's careful analysis of developments in the liturgy of the Chrism Mass shows that beginning at roughly the same time, increasingly greater care was being taken, particularly at Canterbury, to be sure pontificals contained the proper ritual for blessing the oils according to function.⁷¹ Once purified, the oils were collected from the cathedral and then used by the diocesan clergy to make the sign of the cross on a candidate during the various liturgies and in the exorcism of various elements used in the liturgy.⁷²

The rite of baptism contained an exorcism of the elements, but the bishop's role in exorcism may have pertained primarily to the purification of the elements used in the conduct of the judicial ordeal – water, iron and bread.⁷³ Just as the presence of relics imparted a thoroughly ecclesiastical character to the swearing of oaths, the ceremony surrounding the ordeal and the ordeal itself were thoroughly ecclesiastical. Whether a bishop was actually required or if a priest

⁶⁸ G 879, fos. 156r-160r and 170r, in Keynes, "Wulfsgie," 72.

⁶⁹ "... Then, when one ampoule has been blessed, the bishop alone shall communicate and, after receiving the sacrifice, bless the two remaining ampoules, because Christ alone offered his body to God the Father and drank the cup of His Passion, and afterwards the sacraments of his chrism and oil were established" (*LME*, 129).

⁷⁰ Ælfric's second Old English pastoral letter for Wulfstan, in Jones, "The Chrism Mass," 134–5.

⁷¹ Jones, "The Chrism Mass," 121–7, 137.

⁷² A document associated with Christ Church, Canterbury preserves a list of major, presumably minster, churches that collected chrism from the archbishop. Jones suggests that Canterbury's interest in developing a more elaborate Chrism Mass was partly a way to maintain control over these churches (Jones, "The Chrism Mass," 130). Chrism cost 7d. at Canterbury, while the *Textus Roffensis* records a price of 9d. for churches and 6d. for chapels in the diocese of Rochester (*DM*, 77–9; *Textus Roffensis*, 228–31).

⁷³ Keefer, "Manuals," in *Liturgical Books*, 108–9.

could administer the ordeal, however, is not entirely clear. The liturgy appears in pontificals, which suggests that bishops supervised the ordeal, but as Richard Pfaff has noted, even in the pontificals the celebrant is generally called *sacerdos* or *presbyter*, and not *episcopus*.⁷⁴ John Blair has argued that minsters fought to retain the right to administer ordeals, and the limited textual evidence supports this view.⁷⁵ The *Northumbrian Priests' Law* requires that a priest (*proest*) who conducts the ordeal incorrectly pay a fine, and Eadmer records that Archbishop Cuthbert built an addition onto the east end of St Augustine's for the purpose of baptism and the judicial ordeal.⁷⁶ In the reign of William the Conqueror, though, no man could make another undergo trial by ordeal without the bishop's permission, nor could the ordeal be carried out anywhere but at a place designated by the bishop.⁷⁷ Anglo-Saxon bishops must have maintained some control over the ordeal, but exactly how much is unclear. The preparations were certainly elaborate, including a three-day fast on the part of the accused and a special Mass in advance of the solemn procession to the site where the ordeal was to be carried out.⁷⁸ Few pastoral duties bore such obvious witness to the conflation of the sacred and the secular as the supervision of the judicial ordeal. Here bishops, or their representatives, administered the king's justice, and it was patently obvious to everyone involved that at the end of the day, God was judge and jury.

Preaching and Penance

Pontificals, benedictionals and Mass books further show the bishop in his role as occasional celebrant of the Mass, a role he shared with all consecrated priests. The constituent parts of the Mass, which is the primary venue for the formation of the Christian community, follow the life of Christ chronologically, thus inviting participants to relive these events each time they attended.⁷⁹ Ælfric's expectation seems to have been that the laity would attend Mass at least during the important seasons of Lent, Rogationtide, Easter, Pentecost and the Ember Days, although twice a month was the expectation of the *OEERC*.⁸⁰ Because Ælfric's two collections contain forty homilies each, he was obviously providing for more regular attendance. Episcopal blessings in pontificals and benedictionals indicate that bishops were also expected to officiate at Mass during these and other important days in the Church's liturgical year. The celebration of local feast days, the translation of relics and the dedication of churches were further opportunities for

⁷⁴ Pfaff, *Anglo-Saxon Bishop*, 18; Rollason, *Two Anglo-Saxon Rituals*, 14.

⁷⁵ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 238.

⁷⁶ C&S, no. 63 §39; Eadmer in M. Franklin, "The cathedral as parish church. The case of Southern England," in *Church and City 1000–1500. Essays in Honour of Christopher Brooke*, ed. D. Abulafia, M. Franklin and M. Rubin (Cambridge, 1992), 178 n. 17. A law-code of Æthelred mandates that ordeals take place on royal manors (III Æthelred 6 §1).

⁷⁷ R. Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal* (Oxford, 1986), 99.

⁷⁸ Rollason, *Two Anglo-Saxon Rituals*, 12–14.

⁷⁹ For the symbolism of the Mass, see Raw, *Crucifixion Iconography*, 183–6.

⁸⁰ M. Clayton, "Homiliaries and preaching in Anglo-Saxon England," in *Anglo-Saxon History*, 240; C. Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Minneapolis, 1999), 56.

reinforcing episcopal status as well as the Christian faith. Masses celebrated by bishops must have been the cause for the gathering in grand style, where resources permitted, of local nobility and clergy as well as ordinary parishioners.

By the tenth century, however, the Mass had become more than a sacrament through which Christians were reborn on a consistent basis; it was, as the canons suggest, a fundamental opportunity to mold Christian society by means of a sermon or homily, which both bishops and clergy were enjoined to deliver. Ælfric, for one, warned against bad preaching arising from clerical incompetence, remarking that *canes muti non possunt latrare* (dumb dogs cannot bark).⁸¹ The importance of episcopal preaching is well established across a wide variety of sources, in particular the writings of Archbishop Wulfstan, and eloquence in preaching was clearly an episcopal virtue.⁸² William of Malmesbury wrote that when Bishop Wulfstan II of Worcester preached, people listened: “that day Wulfstan’s flow of preaching so watered the people that it was not in doubt that he owed to the Holy Spirit his command of an eloquence that had once moved the tongue of Bede.”⁸³ Likewise, Æthelwold was apparently “splendidly strong in word and deed.”⁸⁴ Eloquence was doubtless a *topos* of hagiography, but given their public roles, it is not unlikely that many Anglo-Saxon bishops were accomplished preachers.⁸⁵ The centrality of preaching is a theme that runs through a wide variety of literary sources, but it appears in several images in the aforementioned *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, indicating its relevance to the bishop of Winchester. Deshman argues that the images of the apostles, John the Evangelist and St Swithun all emphasize, among other things, the importance both of passing on the fundamentals of the faith and correcting bad behavior from the pulpit.⁸⁶

The relatively large number of extant manuscripts containing homiletic material corroborates the likelihood that diocesan clergy, as well as bishops, frequently preached sermons.⁸⁷ As already noted, the most popular sermons in late Anglo-Saxon England were those written in the vernacular by Ælfric of Eynsham.⁸⁸ Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies* survive in some thirty-five manuscripts and nine fragments, a number which surely must be indicative of their popularity.⁸⁹ Not surprisingly, Canterbury seems to have been a center of production

⁸¹ C&S, no. 40.

⁸² J. Wilcox, “The wolf on shepherds: Wulfstan, bishops and the context of the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*,” in *Old English Prose: Basic Readings*, ed. P. Szarmach and D. Oosterhouse (New York, 2000), 398–408.

⁸³ VSW, i, §14.

⁸⁴ VSÆ, §25.

⁸⁵ The *vitae* of Oswald and Dunstan also depict them preaching frequently (HCY, I, 420, 421 and VSD, 37, 48–9, 51, 65).

⁸⁶ Deshman, *Benedictional*, 77, 114 and 138.

⁸⁷ Cf. OEERC, c. 42, where “. . . the people are to be taught through homilies how they can obtain eternal life with the help of God. . . . And the preaching shall be done in such a way that the people understand it.”

⁸⁸ Also extant are the two anonymous collections, Blickling and Vercelli, a generation or so earlier than those of Ælfric and Wulfstan (M. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto, 1977), 7–8 and 168–70).

⁸⁹ G 11, 18, 50, 54, 58, 59.5, 64, 86, 109, 122f, 146f, 177, 262f, 352f, 355, 359, 363, 403, 406, 428f, 435, 472, 520, 569, 637, 638, 639, 644, 657, 670f, 811.5f, 816.6f, 828f, 830f, and 879. One extant sermon in

and distribution, but copies were apparently also in circulation at communities such as Winchester, Rochester, Worcester, Exeter, and Durham, among others.⁹⁰ The purpose of the homilies – preaching – and the language of their composition – the vernacular – made them as useful to minster canons and parish priests as to bishops, abbots and their communities; it is therefore likely that many more copies once existed.⁹¹ Indeed, the Latin preface to Ælfric’s second series of homilies indicates that the collection was destined for Archbishop Sigeric of Canterbury, where it was clearly copied, but Ælfric’s own community produced copies as well, perhaps for minsters and rural churches surrounding the abbey.⁹² The sources for Ælfric’s homilies, which follow the Christian calendar in sequence, were biblical and hagiographical, and as Joyce Hill has noted, his interpretations were ultra orthodox in their debt to patristics.⁹³ Most of the homilies focus on a particular biblical passage or theological point (which is what makes them homilies rather than sermons), although they typically end with a consideration of the day’s broader message. The homily for Pentecost, for instance, not only explains the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit but ends with a short discussion of episcopal authority. Even if he was not on the cutting edge of exegesis, Ælfric provided in these two collections an accessible explication of the fundamentals of Christian theology in a style conducive to oral delivery, an accomplishment unmatched on the Continent.⁹⁴ Ælfric also wrote saints’ lives in the vernacular to accompany his homilies.⁹⁵ Because the saints provided models for Christian behavior, *vitae* were logical sources on which to draw for homilies. The importance of the Ælfric’s body of vernacular work cannot be overestimated. As Clare Lees has remarked, “there comes a point in every tradition when its beliefs are consolidated and institutionalized in a particular culture. Ælfric’s homilies in general offer the most systematic evidence for this consolidation in English in Anglo-Saxon England.”⁹⁶

Archbishop Wulfstan of York also wrote vernacular sermons, which, although relatively few copies survive, probably also enjoyed fairly wide circulation throughout the eleventh century.⁹⁷ Extant manuscripts provide evidence of circulation at Worcester and York, Winchester, Canterbury, Exeter, the West Midlands and the southeast. Some of these, and potentially many others that no longer survive, were probably used in diocesan churches. They were certainly used, as Jonathon Wilcox has demonstrated, by other sermon writers in the

Latin is G 800. Wilcox estimates that Ælfric was responsible for about 15 percent of the extant Old English corpus (Wilcox, “Ælfric in Dorset,” 53 n. 3).

⁹⁰ Wilcox, “Ælfric in Dorset,” 57–8, 61.

⁹¹ Clayton, “Homiliaries and preaching,” 230–42.

⁹² Wilcox, “Ælfric in Dorset,” 56–61.

⁹³ Hill, “Reform and resistance,” 33.

⁹⁴ M. Mc Gatch, “The achievement of Ælfric and his colleagues in European perspective,” in his *Eschatology and Christian Nurture* (Aldershot, 2000), 60.

⁹⁵ G 146f, 262f, 310e, 339, 355, 406, 476f and 657.

⁹⁶ Lees, *Tradition and Belief*, 63, but see Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, 119–128, where it is argued that Ælfric’s impact was less significant.

⁹⁷ G 65.5, 86, 108, 109, 322, 341, 363, 569, 637, 638, 644, 774 and 814 contain Wulfstan sermons in the vernacular, while G 59, 73, 341, 388 and 814 contain sermons in Latin.

eleventh century, underscoring their authoritative character.⁹⁸ Unlike Ælfric, Wulfstan does not appear to have written sermons in liturgical sequence, nor was he apparently interested in hagiography. Of his extant twenty-five sermons, six relate to eschatology, twelve to the fundamentals of the Christian faith, and seven to the functions of an archbishop.⁹⁹ While homilies and sermons were typically inspired by biblical events and aspects of the faith, the many catastrophes of the eleventh century provided plenty of fodder for this sermon writer. Indeed, the *Sermon of the Wolf* paints a famously dark picture, ending with a reminder of an earlier time in England's history when God was so angered with the bad behavior of the kingdom's inhabitants, he allowed an invading army to conquer it.¹⁰⁰ For the most part, however, Anglo-Saxon sermons and homilies are remarkably devoid of temporal references, their composers preferring instead to generalize about Christian behavior and its relationship to salvation.¹⁰¹ It is interesting to note, however, that Anglo-Saxon law-codes sometimes refer to specific historical events, such as the association made in IV Edgar between the plague and lack of attention to the payment of church dues!¹⁰²

Besides the collections by Wulfstan and Ælfric, a further twenty-seven manuscripts of anonymous vernacular homilies and nineteen manuscripts of Latin homilies are extant, making homily collections the most represented texts in the corpus behind psalters and Gospel-books.¹⁰³ While the Latin homiliaries were most suited for use in monastic communities, the Old English had much broader reach. Among the most powerful anonymous homilies were those written for the Rogation Days, the three days of penance leading up to the Ascension, when all Christians were exhorted to purify themselves in preparation for their own return to God, with Christ, on Holy Thursday.¹⁰⁴ As Mary Clayton has shown, the works of Ælfric may have occasionally appealed directly to the hearts and minds of clerics, both monastic and secular, but all were, on some level, applicable to a lay audience.¹⁰⁵ To these must be added the sermons of Archbishop Wulfstan. While we will probably never know the exact audience of individual sermons, R. R. Darlington observed that "by the end of the first quarter of the eleventh century there was in circulation an abundance of homiletic literature in the vernacular, and the bulk of it was suitable for the use of educated parish priests."¹⁰⁶ Its popularity

⁹⁸ Wilcox has determined that fifteen sermons in nine later sermon collections drew on his homilies (J. Wilcox, "The dissemination of Wulfstan's homilies: the Wulfstan tradition in eleventh-century vernacular preaching," in *England in the Eleventh Century*, 202–14).

⁹⁹ *Wulfstan's Homilies*, 29–33.

¹⁰⁰ *EHD*, I, 856.

¹⁰¹ Lees, *Tradition and Belief*, 81–85.

¹⁰² IV Edgar 1.

¹⁰³ Latin G 17, 51, 118, 153, 175.5, 189, 242, 376, 378, 388, 406.5, 418, 461, 539, 574, 609, 782, 804, 925; Vernacular: 18, 39, 44, 50, 59.5, 64, 65.5, 66, 108, 109, 117f, 294, 322, 356f, 359, 366, 376, 520, 524.2f, 538.5, 569, 638, 642, 644, 879, 905, and 941. See Clayton, "Homiliaries and preaching," 217–30 and D. G. Scragg, "The corpus of vernacular homilies and prose saints' lives before Ælfric," *ASE* 8 (1979), 223–77.

¹⁰⁴ Bedingfield, *Dramatic Liturgy*, 193–7.

¹⁰⁵ Clayton, "Homiliaries and preaching," 241–2.

¹⁰⁶ R. R. Darlington, "Ecclesiastical reform in the late Old English period," *EHR* 51 (1936), 409.

is indeed underscored by the fact that the English corpus remained in circulation well into the twelfth century.

Closely related to preaching was the practice of penance, which could be both public and private in the early Middle Ages. The imposition of public penance was typically restricted to a bishop because the sins requiring public acts of penance were presumably much graver than those requiring only priestly intervention, sins that affected the entire community as well as the individual. "Because such sins scandalize," Allen Frantzen paraphrases Ælfric, "those guilty of them must atone before others in order to counter the bad example they have set."¹⁰⁷ Not surprisingly, Archbishop Wulfstan also pontificated upon the necessity of reserving the forgiveness of serious sins to a bishop.¹⁰⁸ Extant law-codes reflect the special role of the bishop in the reconciliation of all sinners, but in particular those who have offended the king. In the reign of Alfred, for instance, persons accused of treason had to forfeit their arms and property, remain a prisoner at a royal residence for forty nights, and do penance as prescribed by the bishop.¹⁰⁹ Likewise, tenth-century bishops were charged with making sure those involved in the blood feud underwent proper penance (and paid proper compensation) before they were allowed to resume attendance at court.¹¹⁰ In the eleventh century, Æthelred's laws made serious crimes "bootless," meaning that they could not be dealt with in private, while Cnut upheld the legal tradition of requiring those who swore false oaths (presumably on holy relics) to make "very severe amends" to God through the bishop.¹¹¹ As Sarah Hamilton has observed, tenth- and eleventh-century bishops obviously sought and received royal support in dealing in the harshest ecclesiastical terms with "perjurers, sorcerers, murderers, and also those who refuse to pay their tithes."¹¹² There is also some indication that the violation of consanguinity laws required the assistance of a bishop to resolve.¹¹³

Legal evidence notwithstanding, it is unclear how often public penance was actually performed in Anglo-Saxon England. Historians have generally assumed, on the basis of the penitential evidence, that private penance imposed by a priest was more common in Anglo-Saxon England than public penance imposed by a bishop, but recent research has challenged this assumption. As Hamilton has shown, thirteen of the twenty-nine extant tenth- and eleventh-century pontificals include *ordines* for public penance, and her comparison of the rites they contain demonstrates that several uniquely English traditions were in use at the same time.¹¹⁴ Associated with reforming bishops, these rites seem to have only gained

¹⁰⁷ Homily for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, in A. Frantzen, *The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Brunswick, 1983), 141.

¹⁰⁸ Napier, LXI.

¹⁰⁹ I Alfred.

¹¹⁰ II Edmund 4.

¹¹¹ VI Æthelred 51; Cnut 1020, 14. P. Hyams, "Feud and the state in late Anglo-Saxon England," *JBS* 40 (2001), 17.

¹¹² S. Hamilton, "Remedies for 'great transgressions': penance and excommunication in late Anglo-Saxon England," in *Pastoral Care*, 98.

¹¹³ C&S, no. 63 §65 and n. 1.

¹¹⁴ In chronological order, G 585, 879, 896, 302, 314, 46, 922, 406.5, 397, 923, 51, 429 and 376 (S. Hamilton, "Rites for public penance in late Anglo-Saxon England," in *Liturgy*, 65–103 and Table 1).

in popularity, at least in liturgical terms, over the course of the eleventh century. It is possible, for example, that an antiphon from the PRG added to the Leofric Missal's rite for Maundy Thursday was in the bishop's own hand, indicating his interest in updating it.¹¹⁵ If public penance were little more than a liturgical relic, it is hard to imagine why he would have bothered. Hamilton's study more or less concurs with M. Bradford Bedingfield's examination of the same evidence, although he argues for a more fluid situation in which public penance was just one of many penitential options.¹¹⁶ In its most elaborate form, the Anglo-Saxon ritual for public penance contains two elements: the Ash Wednesday dismissal of the penitents and their reconciliation on Maundy Thursday. In the former, the bishop places ashes on the heads of penitents before sending them off to think about their sins, while in the latter a much more dramatic liturgy includes a question and answer session followed by the bishop's sermon; a prayer-filled procession of penitents into the church led by the bishop; the prostration of all, including the bishop; the singing of the seven penitential psalms; and ultimately, absolution.¹¹⁷ Only seven extant pontificals contain both of the rites just described, indicating that a form of "mixed" penance, initiated on Ash Wednesday by a priest but concluded on Maundy Thursday by a bishop, was also practiced.¹¹⁸ This should not be interpreted as a watering down of episcopal control over public penance, however, as one strain of English liturgical tradition partially associated with eleventh-century Christ Church, Canterbury gives the bishop unprecedented personal responsibility for absolution.¹¹⁹

The most detailed narrative evidence for what a typical Maundy Thursday might have been like for a bishop comes from the *Life of St Wulfstan*. According to the saint's hagiographer, Wulfstan's day began with Matins, after which he met privately in his quarters with a number of poor men whose feet he washed and whose bodies he clothed. After a short rest, Wulfstan then joined a large number of poor people in the great hall, to whom he distributed food and clothing. Wulfstan retired to pray until Nones, which was followed by the reconciliation of penitents, the penitential Mass, the blessing of the chrism, and dinner with the penitents. Wulfstan's day did not end before he washed the feet of all his monks and served them wine.¹²⁰ It is impossible to know how much of this was poetic license on the part of hagiographer, since humility is a *topos* of hagiography. According to his hagiographer, Bishop Oswald also washed the feet of twelve poor, but there is no further reference to the Maundy Thursday rituals in his

¹¹⁵ Drage, "Bishop Leofric," in Hamilton, "Rites for public penance," 82, n. 77. It is also worth noting that *ordines* for the Maundy Thursday reconciliation of penitents and the blessing of oils likewise comprise a separate part of the combination Mass book and benedictional known as the Giso Sacramentary (G 400; Pfaff, "Massbooks," 19–21).

¹¹⁶ M. Bradford Bedingfield, "Public penance in Anglo-Saxon England," *ASE* 32 (2002), 226 and n. 9.

¹¹⁷ Bedingfield, "Public penance," 236–9. Unlike Wulfstan, Ælfric prohibited sermons on Maundy Thursday, one of the so-called "silent days," so it is unclear what effect his attitude had on the preaching of a sermon during this rite (cf. *Sermo de cena domini* (Napier, XV)).

¹¹⁸ Hamilton, "Rites," 74.

¹¹⁹ Hamilton, "Rites," 81.

¹²⁰ VSW, iii, §18.

vita.¹²¹ It is worth noting that the royal court typically met at Easter, which means that only local bishops would have been able both to officiate at Maundy Thursday rites and to participate in the national council. The participation of the bishop was doubtless desired, and it was clearly an expectation in *vita*, but we cannot be certain if bishops routinely humbled themselves before their communities and the poor of their diocese, or even if their schedules typically allowed for it.

Evidence for public penance not associated with the Lenten season is limited to a mention in the *Life of St Wulfstan* that on one occasion when the saint was dedicating a church, he gave such a rousing sermon on the virtues of peace that the crowd was moved to spontaneous public penance.¹²² Anglo-Saxon homilies exhort repentance and absolution, making the link between behavior and salvation explicit to their listeners, while other texts instruct the confessor how to properly administer private penance. Handbooks for penance, or penitentials, have a long pedigree in the western Church, but in England in the tenth century, ideas about penance appear to have been revised to some degree, at least insofar as older texts were combined in new ways.¹²³ Changes in fashion doubtless account for the dearth of extant penitentials. Although it was one of the books included in Ælfric's list of books every priest should possess, no actual penitentials used by diocesans are extant. These were doubtless copied from exemplars that do survive, texts such as the tenth-century *scritfboc* based on Theodore's penitential, a tenth-century abbreviation of Halitgar known as the Pseudo-Egbert penitential, and the so-called *Directions for a Confessor*.¹²⁴ These texts were typically bundled together in manuscripts, such as London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A. iii, which contains a wide range of episcopal and monastic texts. Although it is difficult to be sure, the weight of evidence suggests that confession, public as well as private, had, by the eleventh century, become a more established practice. That it had entered into the realm of secular as well as ecclesiastical law is evidenced by I Cnut's appeal that all Christians in the realm "readily confess our misdeeds to our confessors."¹²⁵

An act of humility, penance was central to Christian life in general and to the lives of the clergy in particular. Both the *Regularis concordia* and the *OEERC* enjoin regular confession, weekly for monks and every three weeks for canons.¹²⁶ As the heads of their communities, both inside and outside the cathedral, bishops were attractive confessors. Sources indicate that abbots and noblemen also sought out episcopal intercession. Hugh Candidus records the sad story of Adulph, the king's chancellor, who accidentally smothered his child who was sleeping between him and his wife; Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester was his confessor.¹²⁷

¹²¹ VSO, 470.

¹²² VSW, ii, §15.

¹²³ Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 173–4.

¹²⁴ Hamilton, "Remedies," 87–8.

¹²⁵ I Cnut 18b1.

¹²⁶ RC, xxxix and c. 22; *OEERC*, cc. 29 and 30. See also S. Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance, 900–1050* (London, 2001), chapter 3.

¹²⁷ *The Chronicle of Hugh Candidus*, ed. W. T. Mellows (Oxford, 1949), 16.

Because his *vita* contains more mundane details than most, we know that Bishop Wulfstan II of Worcester was the confessor for Earl Harold as well as Archbishop Ealdred and Abbot Æthelsige of Evesham. The bishop's own confessor, it seems, was Bishop Robert of Hereford.¹²⁸ Diocesans also facilitated clerical and lay pilgrimage, the ultimate act of penance, by providing formulaic letters to accompany penitential pilgrims, usually to Rome. Two such letters by Wulfstan of Sherborne and four by Archbishop Wulfstan are extant.¹²⁹

The Evidence for Synods

Many of the Church's fundamental assumptions are reflected in penitential services. All Christians, including bishops, were supposed to be humble and penitent and express their humility publicly as well as privately through penance and in their care for the poor.¹³⁰ Moreover, in their roles as spiritual heads of their dioceses, bishops were supposed to lead in deed as in word. The belief that both – leading by example and preaching good sermons – were equally necessary is a theme that ties diverse evidence, from canons and homilies to rules and *vitae*, together. The faults of both clergy and laity were corrected liturgically through sacramental confession and extra-liturgically through preaching, but because the clergy were charged with the care of many souls besides their own, additional measures were needed to assure their competence on an ongoing basis. The canons specify that bishops were to make frequent visitations of their dioceses to monitor the competence of the clergy, and while evidence for such perambulations is typically lacking, the *Life of St Wulfstan* would have us believe that this bishop spent a fair amount of time touring his diocese.¹³¹ Given the size of the diocese of Worcester, it is not unlikely that Wulfstan did make frequent visitations, but the size of a diocese such as Dorchester must have precluded a yearly visit to each and every village priest. A more efficient means of monitoring clerical competence was the diocesan synod. It is certainly possible that diocesan synods took place in the cathedral when priests came to collect chrism, but it is just as likely that they coincided with meetings of the shire court, just as national synods were often part of larger meetings of the king's *witan*.¹³² In any case, the evidence for diocesan synods is typically anecdotal. The sources only specify that Archbishop Ælfheah of Canterbury, Ealdred of York, and Wulfstan II of Worcester held frequent synods.¹³³ There is also the record of two synods, attended by two archbishops, six bishops and a host of abbots, earls and thegns, at

¹²⁸ VSW, i, §7; iii, §21.

¹²⁹ C&S, nos. 42 and 43.

¹³⁰ See V. Thompson, "The pastoral contract in late Anglo-Saxon England: priest and parishioner in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Miscellaneous 482," in *Pastoral Care*, 115–16.

¹³¹ C&S, 20.3; VSW, i, §15; ii, §10, 14, 17, 18; iii, §9.

¹³² Barlow, *English Church* I, 246.

¹³³ Osborn's *Life of St Alfege*, ed. F. Shaw (London, 1999), 48; *Life of St John of Beverley*, in HCY, I, 241, 242; *The Cartulary of Worcester Cathedral Priory*, ed. R. R. Darlington (London, 1968).

which the crimes and forfeitures of one Wulfgar were discussed.¹³⁴ The only other unambiguous evidence is the fine assessed against priests who stay away from the diocesan synod mentioned in the *Northumbrian Priests' Law*.¹³⁵

The silence of the sources has led most scholars to argue that diocesan synods were rare in later Anglo-Saxon England. This is, however, too narrow an interpretation of the evidence. Manuscripts such as the so-called commonplace books associated with Archbishop Wulfstan, in their stitching together of canonical material and pastoral letters, reflect the pastoral concerns of diocesans, and indeed make the most sense in this context. It is, of course, reasonable to question the actual use to which these books were put; it may be that they reflect the concerns of one man rather than an institution. The fact that one such collection, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190, was probably written at Worcester in the early eleventh century but was at Exeter within a few decades, speaks to its broader appeal. Another copy of the collection, London, BL, Cotton Nero A. i, which contains emendations in Wulfstan's own hand, looks to be just the sort of reference book a bishop would find useful in a diocesan synod. Its relatively small size (a little thinner and taller than a modern paperback) and its contents (a variety of canonical, legal, penitential and related texts) both speak to its usefulness in this context. Patrick Wormald has likened the manuscript to "a *vade mecum* for an itinerant preacher."¹³⁶ Because it contains material specific to bishops, however, it seems equally plausible that it served the purpose suggested here.

Another interesting manuscript, with similarities to Wulfstan's commonplace books, is London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A. iii, which was produced at Christ Church, Canterbury in the first quarter of the eleventh century. Like Wulfstan's commonplace books, this manuscript was very broadly conceived. Besides the penitential texts discussed above, the manuscript also includes a glossed copy of the *Rule* of St Benedict, the *Regularis concordia*, prognostications and charms, Ælfric's *Colloquy*, texts on the reckoning of time, a tract on the examination of an archbishop, homilies (several by Ælfric and Wulfstan and other anonymous ones), the *Life of St Margaret*, a lapidary, monastic signs, Ælfric's letter to Archbishop Wulfstan, several Offices and miscellaneous prayers and devotions.¹³⁷ At first glance, this is a puzzlingly eclectic collection, but as Tracey-Anne Cooper has shown, the ways in which the texts were both reworked and grouped together within the manuscript according to function made it a very useful guidebook for an archbishop with diverse responsibilities. The purposes of the Benedictine texts are clear enough, but as Cooper persuasively argues, the fifteen homilies, which "are united by their theological simplicity," and the twenty-two texts related to confession, were directed toward the laity and not the community's

¹³⁴ RASC, no. 63.

¹³⁵ C&S, no. 63.44.

¹³⁶ It is impossible to determine with which of Wulfstan's dioceses this manuscript is associated, York or Worcester. Wormald concludes only that it was produced in his circle (Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 203).

¹³⁷ Tracey-Anne Cooper, "Reconstructing a deconstructed manuscript, community and culture: London, BL, MS Cotton Tiberius A. iii," Ph.D. dissertation, Boston College, 2005, Table 6.1.

inmates.¹³⁸ The homilies, for example, were skillfully redacted to provide more information about biblical figures than their exemplars, the assumption being that average men and women were less familiar with biblical stories than churchmen. Taken together, the homilies, which emphasize the Christian's "inward heart," provide a very basic introduction to the faith. The confessional texts likewise indicate that the intended penitents were lay and not monastic, although their emphasis on internal piety is certainly suggestive of monastic influence. Cooper draws several important conclusions from her study of these texts in their manuscript context: besides the monastic influence, she concludes that "lay religious culture of Late Anglo-Saxon England was not, as is often assumed, degenerate or desultory, but . . . dynamic and responsive."¹³⁹ Suiting the needs of monks, canons and laymen and women alike, the manuscript is indeed an "integrated microcosm of the eleventh-century religious and intellectual milieu."¹⁴⁰

If the manuscripts it produced are any indication, the community of late Anglo-Saxon Worcester was similarly concerned with the fundamentals of pastoral care. A particularly interesting example is Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 482, a product of the mid eleventh century, which contains many of the same texts that appear in Cotton Tiberius A. iii as well as confessional texts and *ordines*. According to a recent commentator, Victoria Thompson, the sophistication of the liturgical elements indicate that Laud Misc. 482 was "part of a movement in the late Anglo-Saxon Church that brought an intensely pragmatic and experienced attitude to penance."¹⁴¹ Like Tiberius A. iii, we cannot be absolutely certain how the manuscript was used, but it clearly reflects Worcester's concern for the pastoral rituals associated with the end of life.

Whether or not parts of these manuscripts and others like them were disseminated at diocesan synods is a matter of debate. They were, however, suitable to this purpose. Still, the relationship between synods and extant canonical material is obscure. In one case, however, scholars have posited a relationship between texts and actual meetings. Dorothy Whitelock and Kenneth Sisam both argued that the two recensions of Æthelred's Enham law-codes, so-called V and VI Æthelred, represent the main code established at Enham and a redaction made for dissemination at a diocesan synod, respectively.¹⁴² The orthodoxy of this relationship has recently been challenged, however, by Patrick Wormald, who convincingly argues for just the opposite: that VI Æthelred was a draft in the process of preparing the official version in V Æthelred.¹⁴³ Sisam's view that VI Æthelred was prepared in advance of a diocesan synod cannot, therefore, be accepted without serious reservations, but the conclusion that a close relationship once existed between royal law-codes and diocesan synods still stands.

¹³⁸ Cooper, "Reconstructing," 183–4 and *passim*.

¹³⁹ Cooper, "Reconstructing," 247–8.

¹⁴⁰ Cooper, "Reconstructing," 4.

¹⁴¹ Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 73.

¹⁴² K. Sisam, *Studies in the History of Old English Literature* (Oxford, 1953), 278–87; Whitelock, *EHD*, I, 442 and C&S, 341–3.

¹⁴³ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 332–5 and n. 338.

Wulfstan's *Canons of Edgar* certainly imply that the diocesan synod was the proper place to disseminate ecclesiastical law. One of the canons specifies that priests were to bring ink and vellum to synods to copy down the ordinances enacted there, as well as enough food to last for three days.¹⁴⁴ The pragmatic nature of this directive suggests its authenticity, although making the leap from the rarefied world of prescriptive literature to the untidy realm of actual practice is always risky.

Like the commonplace books, Ælfric's Pastoral Letters make the most sense in the context of diocesan synods. After all, the rubric that prefaces the letter on behalf of Bishop Wulfsig of Sherborne is "concerning the priests' synod."¹⁴⁵ The letter begins with the phrase, "I tell you priests that I am not willing to support your negligence in your service," but the "I" refers not to Ælfric but to Wulfsig. Although it does refer to abuses such as drunkenness, allowing the host to get moldy, and leaving mouse droppings on the altar, the letter is as much a blueprint for how the Church should function as a rebuke of unworthy priests.¹⁴⁶ It describes the duties of the seven orders of the Church, the seven canonical hours each priest should sing, the appropriate vestments, church-plate, and the books each priest was expected to own. It further instructs priests on the threefold division of church dues, and exhorts them to teach the fundamentals of the faith, baptize children and anoint the sick immediately and without remuneration, and deliver penance with moderation. The level of detail, particularly regarding Easter liturgies, is impressive, as is the careful exposition of the doctrine of transubstantiation, which the letter exhorts priests to explain correctly to their parishioners. Another letter by Ælfric, this time on behalf of Archbishop Wulfstan, begins in a similar fashion – "it befits us bishops that we reveal to you priests the written instruction which our canon teaches us" – and takes up similar issues, albeit in more expansive language and with more complicated allusions to biblical and early Christian precedents.¹⁴⁷ This letter contains additional injunctions against the participation of clerics in warfare. The *Canons of Edgar* as well as the law-codes Wulfstan authored, contain many of the same injunctions, although law-codes are typically directed to a much wider audience. These texts are all related to each other, both textually and codicologically, and they reflect an impressive level of cooperation between authors such as Ælfric and Wulfstan on the one hand, and a diocesan like Wulfsig on the other.

Another document bearing Archbishop Wulfstan's influence, but probably authored by someone in his circle, is the *Northumbrian Priests' Law*, which has been referred to above and which presumably reflects some of the problems affecting the northern diocese.¹⁴⁸ Less concerned with the finer points of liturgy, it focuses instead on more basic issues, such as rogue priests who celebrate Mass

¹⁴⁴ C&S, no. 48.

¹⁴⁵ C&S, no. 40.

¹⁴⁶ The length of the text is impressive: it runs from page 295 to 308 in G 59.5 and from fo. 101v to 110 in G 644 (C&S, 191).

¹⁴⁷ C&S, no. 46.

¹⁴⁸ C&S, no. 63. For authorship, see Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 208–10 and 396–7.

without the bishop's consent, who refuse a bishop or archdeacon's summons, who forget to collect the chrism at the proper time, and who celebrate Mass in an unconsecrated building or without wine. It further prohibits the celebration of the Mass more than three times a day, presumably for financial gain. Unlike the pastoral letters and canons, this text assesses fines for infractions of the rules, such as the twelve *ores* to be paid for consecrating the host in a wooden rather than a metal chalice. It also allows for clerical marriage, directing that "if a priest leaves a women and takes another, *anathema sit!*" In the same vain, the *OEERC* exhorts priests to "think of how to maintain their purity by keeping their bodies chaste unless they are truly bound in matrimonial bonds."¹⁴⁹ Ælfric, however, had no patience for married clergy and constantly exhorted them to live chastely.¹⁵⁰ Wulfstan II of Worcester seems to have shared Ælfric's disdain, despite (or perhaps because of) the fact that he was, himself, the son of a priest.¹⁵¹ In the case of Wulfstan II, however, it is possible that we are witnessing his hagiographer, William of Malmesbury's disdain, and not Wulfstan's. In any case, it is instructive that a ban on clerical marriage contained in a manuscript associated with Archbishop Wulfstan, also a foe of married clergy, was at some point erased and replaced with "it is right that a priest love a decent woman as a bedmate."¹⁵² The monastic filter doubtless obscures our understanding of general attitudes towards clerical celibacy in the later Anglo-Saxon period.

Historians have often concluded the worst based on the abuses contained in these sources, but Joyce Hill has convincingly argued that the expectations expressed in the pastoral letters are in fact impressive, in particular the expectation that priests know the liturgy, both daily and special, that they have access to the various texts for the liturgy and that they know how to use them.¹⁵³ One imagines that bishops delivered stinging sermons at synods drawn from these canons and pastoral letters. It is also possible that Ælfric was writing, at least in the case of Wulfstan, she suggests, on behalf of a monastic bishop who was not himself familiar with the workings of the secular Church, and that these letters served the purpose of guiding monk-bishops more than maintaining an accurate record of abuses by diocesan clergy. This would obviously not apply to Archbishop Wulfstan, but it is worth considering the possibility that monastic bishops needed a primer on ecclesiastical life outside the cloister, particularly if they had only recently been ordained mass-priests.¹⁵⁴

Although they provide few details about the workings of diocesan synods, references in the canonical material indicate that they performed a similar function to the Chapter Office. Although synods included sacramental aspects, their

¹⁴⁹ *OEERC*, c. 62. It further enjoins them to avoid public feasting, in particular weddings and other "social gatherings where amorous and shameless songs are sung or where lewd gestures of the body are accompanied with singing and dancing" (*OEERC*, c. 66).

¹⁵⁰ *C&S*, no. 40 §1–3, 13–25; no. 46 §81–8); also, see his homily for Sexagesima Sunday in the second series.

¹⁵¹ *VSW*, iii, §12. See also Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, 29–32.

¹⁵² G 341, quoted in Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 203 and n. 164.

¹⁵³ Hill, "Monastic reform," 109.

¹⁵⁴ See the discussion of the *Old English Benedictine Office*, above 74.

purpose was primarily administrative. As the fifth canon in the *Canons of Edgar* remarks, “it is right that priests announce in a synod if anything is harming them, and if any man has seriously ill-used them.”¹⁵⁵ Synods were also opportunities for priests to settle disputes among themselves, and one imagines that chief among such disputes were disagreements over parish boundaries resulting in the misdirection of tithes. Finally, a priest was to “announce in a synod if he knows in his parish any man disobedient to God . . . whom he cannot turn to repentance or dare not because of worldly power.” It may be that we are looking at the ideal situation in these texts, but it does not necessarily follow that diocesan synods did not occur simply because they appear infrequently as such in extant sources. In an age before systematic recordkeeping, this should come as no surprise.¹⁵⁶

Administering the Dioceses

The national and diocesan responsibilities of some English bishops, in particular the metropolitans, must have frequently pulled them in several directions at once. It is difficult to see how bishops who were very active in the king’s government and bishops of very large dioceses could have met all of their responsibilities either in the cathedral or in the diocese. Beginning in the later eleventh century, the western Church, including the English Church, was slowly developing an administrative infrastructure that would systematize pastoral care (thereby providing historians with a great deal more evidence), but in the tenth and eleventh centuries, no such infrastructure existed. As the *OEERC* frequently notes, bishops who needed help getting everything done were allowed to delegate some duties to subordinates. In the cathedrals, deans and provosts were the bishops’ right-hand men and could therefore assume some of their duties.¹⁵⁷ But for the activities that required a bishop, it is possible that coadjutants, or *chorepiscopi*, took up some of the slack. The office of *chorepiscopus* was not canonically legitimate; anecdotal evidence suggests, however, that it was not unheard of in Anglo-Saxon England. Given the schedule of a typical archbishop of Canterbury, it would make sense that incumbents of the primatial see had a *chorepiscopus*, as some stray references imply, whose seat was at St Martin’s.¹⁵⁸ Two men, Siward and Godwine, attest charters as “bishop of St Martin’s” toward the end of Eadsige’s pontificate.¹⁵⁹ Bishops who held more than one see would also need occasional assistance. Vanessa King has argued that a discrepancy in the dates for Ealdred’s appointments indicates he acted as a coadjutant for a time. Ealdred attests a charter as bishop c. 1043, when he was still abbot of Tavistock, at a time

¹⁵⁵ C&S, no. 48.

¹⁵⁶ Unlike early Anglo-Saxon synodical evidence, which survives because it remained relevant to later Anglo-Saxons, it is my contention that similar records for the later Anglo-Saxon Church do not survive because they served little purpose in the post-Gregorian world.

¹⁵⁷ For the English evidence, see M. Deanesly, *Sidelights on Anglo-Saxon Church* (London, 1962), 155–70.

¹⁵⁸ S 1208, 1404, 1472 and 1473; ASC, s.a. 1061 (E). Brett, “The church at Rochester,” 10.

¹⁵⁹ RASC, nos. 102 and 108. See also ASC, s.a. 1044 (CE), 1048 (C). Brooks, *Early History*, 299–300.

when his predecessor at Tavistock, Lyfing, was holding the sees of Worcester, Devon and Cornwall.¹⁶⁰ If anyone needed help, it would have been Lyfing, whose responsibilities were enormous and whose advanced age could not have made his burden any easier. At the same time, Ealdred appears to have resigned his abbacy, since a charter of Sihtric, abbot of Tavistock was written prior to Lyfing's death.¹⁶¹ Thus Ealdred appears to have been acting as *chorepiscopus* in the years leading up to Lyfing's death and Ealdred's own appointment as successor to one of his sees, Worcester. A bishop who could not discharge his duties because of illness or infirmity would also find a *chorepiscopus* necessary. Such was the case of Bishop Æthelstan of Hereford who had been blind for thirteen years of his episcopate; John of Worcester and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* record that his duties were discharged by Tremeurig, bishop of the Welsh see of St David's.¹⁶² Susan Pearce has suggested that coadjutants for the dioceses of Winchester, Exeter and Sherborne may also once have existed.¹⁶³

The issue of archdeacons is only slightly less ambiguous. As the parochial structure of England developed, archdeacons, who would call on a part of the diocese in advance of an episcopal visit or in the bishop's stead, became a necessity. A deacon was not a priest *per se*, but because it was an earlier stage in a priest's career, a priest could continue to perform a deacon's administrative duties once he was ordained.¹⁶⁴ Thus archdeacons could theoretically assume a variety of episcopal burdens within the diocese. The *OEERC* and the *Northumbrian Priests' Law* assume the existence of archdeacons, and both the *vita* of Bishop Wulfstan and Domesday Book mention some by name.¹⁶⁵ Years ago William Levison wrote that archdeacons came into England from the Continent c. 800 through Kent.¹⁶⁶ Darlington pointed out, however, that their existence was probably more rare in the southern bishoprics where dioceses were smaller, although archdeacons may have served pre-Conquest bishops of Canterbury, London and Winchester.¹⁶⁷ The language employed by the sources adds to the confusion, as deacons probably performed many of the duties that would later be defined as archidiaconal. Territorial and multiple archdeaconries are, however, probably post-Conquest developments.¹⁶⁸ In any case, it seems reasonable to assume that the clerks who composed the returns for Domesday Book, as well as William of Malmesbury, knew an archdeacon when they saw one.

¹⁶⁰ S 1004 in King, "Ealdred," 124.

¹⁶¹ S 1474.

¹⁶² ASC, s.a. 1055 (CD); JW, s.a. 1055.

¹⁶³ Oda, bishop of Ramsbury and future archbishop of Canterbury, might have had a coadjutant who was styled "bishop of Berkshire" (RASC, no. 22). See also S. D. Pearce, *The Kingdom of Dumnonia. Studies in History and Tradition in South-Western Britain A.D. 350–1150* (Padstow, 1978), 115. For the inclusion of Crediton, see Drage, "Bishop Leofric," 17.

¹⁶⁴ Also abbot deacons (Deanesly, *Sidelights*, 149–53).

¹⁶⁵ *OEERC*, c. 8; C&S, no. 63.6–7; VSW, iii, §15; DB, i, 1v. Barlow, *English Church I*, 248.

¹⁶⁶ W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), 107. See also M. Deanesly, "The archdeacons of Canterbury under Abbot Ceolnoth," *EHR* 42 (1927), 1–11.

¹⁶⁷ Darlington, "Ecclesiastical reform," 413 n.1; Barlow, *English Church I*, 247.

¹⁶⁸ Barlow, *English Church I*, 247–9 and *idem*, *English Church II*, 48–50.

The diocesan activities of Anglo-Saxon bishops mirrored, in some fundamental ways, their kingdom-wide activities. All ultimately devolved from the belief that the battle for men's souls could not be won without a complete reorientation of the secular world in religious terms. This reorientation is reflected in the intertextuality of a wide range of sources, legal, canonical, penitential and homiletic. Ælfric and Wulfstan may have given the program its shape, but as Patrick Wormald has argued, its ideology was Mosaic and Carolingian. In short, "law designed to repress sin and crime was increasingly fused with a pastoral tradition striving for moral and spiritual rearmament."¹⁶⁹ Nothing in the contemporary evidence suggests the kind of moral and pastoral decay portrayed in later sources; if anything, this chapter and the last have shown that many of the ecclesiastical leaders of later Anglo-Saxon England, secular as well as monastic, cared deeply about the spirituality of the cathedrals and the quality of pastoral care in the dioceses. The program of revitalization spanned two broad ecclesiastical movements with significant roots on the Continent, the Benedictine Reform of the late tenth century and the regeneration of the secular life of the mid eleventh. The English drew deeply from from these two Continental traditions. But as the sources repeatedly show, erudite, articulate and zealous bishops and other clergymen interwove the new with the old, drawing on England's intellectual and spiritual past to reform the present and the future. They could, of course, always have done better, but as the next chapter will show, the resources of the Church were often stretched perilously thin in these years.

¹⁶⁹ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 345 and chapter 6.

Episcopal Wealth

ALTHOUGH property has rightly dominated discussions of early medieval wealth and power, surprisingly few historians have shown any real interest in the wealth of the Anglo-Saxon episcopate. For a variety of reasons, the wealth of the monastic Church in pre-Conquest England has drawn the most attention, as well as the effects of the Norman Conquest on the Church's overall interests.¹ As a result, we know very little about the magnitude and composition of the wealth of Anglo-Saxon bishops, despite the fact that the participation of bishops in the *witan* reflected their large stake in the kingdom's resources as well as their spiritual superiority. Once again, the nature of the evidence partly accounts for this lacuna, for to compile even the most impressionistic sense of episcopal wealth before the Conquest means diving head-first into the deep and murky waters of Domesday Book, the great land survey commissioned by William the Conqueror in 1086. In recent years, warnings against using the survey's numbers in a rigidly quantitative fashion have increased, based partly on its legendary inconsistencies, but also on the possibility that only a portion of land was actually valued in the survey.² Such warnings are worth heeding, as these and other problems obviously render precise figures unattainable.³ I present the following statistics, however flawed they may be, because they provide the only means of saying anything about the relative value of episcopal patrimonies on the eve of the Conquest. In short, the weight of recent scholarship suggests it is possible to produce an approximate picture of the size, value and location of episcopal estates on the eve of the Norman Conquest on the basis of the Domesday survey and its satellites, particularly when they are used in conjunction with other administrative sources, such as charters, wills, writs and miscellaneous memoranda. These sources also have their shortcomings, particularly in terms of their distribution over time and

¹ For the link between land and power, see the important collection of essays edited by W. Davies and P. Fouracre, *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1995). The classic treatment of monastic wealth is D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England, 940–1216*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1963), 100–3, Appendix 6. See also A. Ayton and V. Davis, "Ecclesiastical wealth in England in 1086," *SCH* 24 (Oxford, 1987), 47–60. A useful survey of the post-Conquest endowments of English episcopal communities is Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*.

² In a controversial study that proposes to sever the Domesday survey from the inquest, David Roffe has argued that the survey only includes hidated land and not the lords' inland, which means that values are drastically understated (D. Roffe, *Domesday, The Inquest and the Book* (Oxford, 2000), 154–5).

³ The most glaring problem is the absence of the counties of Durham and Northumberland and the towns of London and Winchester from the survey.

Episcopal Wealth

across counties, which is uneven at best.⁴ And they often survive, as previously noted, only in post-Conquest cartularies. But together they enable us to sketch a useful, though necessarily incomplete, picture of late Anglo-Saxon episcopal landholding.

This chapter will address questions of fundamental importance to the economic history of the late Anglo-Saxon episcopal Church, including the value and geographical distribution of lands held by bishops, the means by which these lands were acquired, and the ways in which entrepreneurial bishops utilized non-tenurial resources to offset diminishing patronage. An examination of episcopal landholding based on these sources indicates that the bulk of Anglo-Saxon episcopal wealth was acquired in the first several centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period, and that it was primarily the result of royal benefaction. From the late ninth century onward, however, royal gifts diminished in size and number, for reasons about which we can only speculate. As this analysis will also show, individual sees reacted to these changes in dramatically different ways.

The Value of Episcopal Endowments

An examination of pre-Conquest episcopal endowments in Domesday Book reveals that as a corporate body the episcopal Church controlled about 8 percent of the kingdom's landed wealth in 1066 (see table 5.1).⁵ This is a conservative estimate for several reasons. First, there is no Domesday survey for the county of Durham, and so the endowment of the bishopric of Durham cannot be valued.⁶ Second, the value of Canterbury's endowment is understated because it does not include significant alienations made in the pre-Conquest period to earls and their families, which may have been bona fide leases for which the see got something in return. It is likely that the value of the archbishop of York's lands is also understated in Domesday Book, perhaps dramatically, because of the Conqueror's harrying of the North and the manorial reorganization of Yorkshire.⁷ Finally, it is possible that some of the values for lands held of episcopal manors, which defy easy interpretation, should be added to the demesne totals of the manors. For the sake of consistency, however, they are not. These caveats notwithstanding, it appears that English bishops, whose estates were valued at around £5,400, held on the eve of the Conquest almost as much land as Edward the Confessor, but quite a bit less than the wealthiest comital family in England, the Godwinesons,

⁴ For a good discussion of the usefulness of Domesday Book, charters, wills, writs and memoranda in this type of analysis, including their weaknesses, see Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, 11–16. For the authentication of charters, see Keynes, “St Wulfsige,” 70.

⁵ The source for the overall value of England's landed resources is H. C. Darby, *Domesday England* (Cambridge, 1977; rpt 1986), Appendix 12 (£71,573).

⁶ The lands belonging to the bishopric of Durham have, however, been discussed in H. E. Craster, “The patrimony of St Cuthbert,” *EHR* 69 (1954), 177–99; Aird, *St Cuthbert*, chapter I; and HSC, commentary and Appendix II.

⁷ See P. Dalton, *Conquest, Anarchy and Lordship: Yorkshire, 1066–1154* (Cambridge, 1994).

Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England

who had amassed a staggering £7,700 worth of lands across the kingdom.⁸ The episcopal Church also lagged behind the the kingdom's monastic communities, which numbered more than forty and together held about £7,185 on the eve of the Conquest.⁹

Bishopric	Hides/car./sul.	Total Value
Canterbury	900	1,330
Winchester	1,235	1,180
Sherborne	475	435
London	295	410
York	630	370
Worcester	610	330
Hereford	300	245
Dorchester	390	215
Exeter	145	205
North Elmham	80	190
Wells	190	180
Selsey	190	145
Rochester	60	100
Lichfield	110	75
Durham*	60	20
Total	5,670	£5,430

Table 5.1 Episcopal endowments in Domesday Book ranked by value (rounded to the nearest £5). * Includes only the see's Yorkshire estates.

In terms of the overall distribution of episcopal estates, bishops held in every county except Northamptonshire and Rutland (in the diocese of Dorchester) and in the land between the Mersey and the Ribble (in the diocese of Lichfield).¹⁰ Episcopal holdings within shires, however, varied considerably. In some, like Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, Leicestershire and Cambridgeshire, episcopal interests were relatively small.¹¹ In others, like Yorkshire, Worcestershire, Hampshire, Kent and Middlesex, bishops controlled between roughly one-fifth and one-third of the total recorded land by value.

As the aggregate figures show, however, there were vast differences in episcopal endowments. The holdings of the very richest sees, Winchester and Canterbury, were worth upwards of eighteen times the holdings of the very poorest, Rochester and Lichfield. The diocese of the former was not very large, so the impact of such a small endowment on pastoral care was probably less than it was on the latter, whose diocese was one of the largest. To undertake pastoral care on

⁸ The lands of the king and the comital family are valued at £3,840 plus £2,310 farm and £7,700, respectively (Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, Tables 3.3 and 3.1).

⁹ Knowles, *Monastic Order*, Appendix VI. This figure does not include the value of the monastic cathedrals of Christ Church, Canterbury, Old Minster, Winchester, St Mary's of Worcester and Sherborne.

¹⁰ Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, the reader is directed to the appendix as the source for the statistics discussed in this chapter.

¹¹ It is probably not a coincidence that these low percentages were recorded in shires in the massive diocese of Dorchester, whose seat was in southern Oxfordshire. For county totals: Darby, *Domesday England*, Appendix 12.

such meager resources must have been challenging indeed. Between Lichfield and Rochester at the bottom of the scale and Canterbury and Winchester at the top lay the eleven remaining sees, and once again the value of the endowment did not always correspond to the size of the diocese. The resources of the sees of North Elmham and Exeter were also meager compared to the size of their dioceses, while the large dioceses of York and Dorchester ranked only somewhere in the middle compared with the well-off sees of London, Worcester and Sherborne, whose dioceses were quite a bit smaller. These figures reflect the fact that the accumulation of episcopal estates was not a centralized affair. In other words, the values reflect not what the individual sees ought to have had as resources but what they were able to acquire over time, and in *ad hoc* fashion. Entrepreneurial bishops were thus key to the accumulation of resources and, conversely, disinterested leaders undoubtedly disastrous.

Although the influence of the episcopal Church was kingdom-wide, individual endowments were, by and large, intensely local in character. This is in marked contrast with the landholding patterns of England's greatest non-ecclesiastical magnates, who tended to accumulate kingdom-wide interests. As Robin Fleming has shown, the king held lands in every county except the five in which the earls were dominant, Cheshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire and Rutland.¹² The Godwinesons' holdings were likewise spread over thirty-two shires, the Leofricsons' over twenty-one, and the Siwardsons' over eight.¹³ Lower on the social scale were the great thegns, stallers and royal priests, who also tended to accumulate kingdom-wide interests.¹⁴ The will of Wulfric Spot, a tenth-century thegn, reveals that he held lands in at least eleven shires, while Wulfweard White held estates in thirteen.¹⁵ The stallers Ansgar and Bondi each held lands in at least eight shires, and the royal priests Spirites and Regenbald in five and seven shires, respectively.¹⁶ The Domesday evidence thus shows that important pre-Conquest lay magnates accrued broad bases of power, which was not typical of most bishops.

Many of Anglo-Saxon England's greatest monastic communities also held lands scattered across the kingdom. The wealthiest, Glastonbury, held about 800 hides, half of which were in Somerset, a third in Wiltshire, and the remainder spread over the counties of Dorset, Devonshire, Hampshire, Gloucestershire and Berkshire.¹⁷ Likewise, Ely Abbey possessed more than 100 demesne villis in six counties.¹⁸ Westminster Abbey, Edward the Confessor's *eigenkloster*, held in fifteen counties, while Ramsey Abbey held in eight in the East Midlands and East

¹² The Godwinesons, for instance, held about 40 percent of the county of Essex by value (Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, Tables 3.3 and 3.1 and Darby, *Domesday England*, Appendix 12).

¹³ Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, Table 3.1.

¹⁴ For a discussion of thegnly landholding, see C. Senecal, "Keeping up with the Godwinesons: in pursuit of aristocratic status in late Anglo-Saxon England," *ANS* 23 (2001), 251–66.

¹⁵ Wills, no. 17; K. Mack, "The staller: administrative innovation in the reign of Edward the Confessor," *Journal of Medieval History* 12 (1986), 128.

¹⁶ Mack, "The staller," 128; S. Keynes, "Regenbald the chancellor (*sic*)," *ANS* 10 (1988), 195–7.

¹⁷ M. Costen, "Dunstan, Glastonbury and the economy of Somerset," in *St Dunstan*, 37.

¹⁸ E. Miller, *The Abbey and Bishopric of Ely* (Cambridge, 1951), 16.

Anglia.¹⁹ Clearly, England's greatest lords, lay and monastic, accumulated kingdom-wide resources to match their status as national leaders. It is, therefore, quite remarkable that the same was not true of English bishops, who were their colleagues in the *witan*. Episcopal holdings, it would seem, were generally confined to shires within bishops' dioceses. Only the diocesan, and no other bishop, for instance, held in nearly half of all shires in England. Such landholding patterns may suggest that the episcopal Church, with some notable exceptions, had internalized the early synodical prohibition against bishops interfering in one another's dioceses, but this may be reading too much into it.²⁰ Abbots, by contrast, were not bound by similar geographical limitations.

In instances where bishops were holding extra-diocesan lands, the reasons are sometimes apparent. If, for instance, the bishop of Winchester received the 30-hide estate of Brightwell in Berkshire in 854 from King Æthelwulf, as Winchester tradition held, the grant probably reflected earlier diocesan arrangements. Berkshire had only been transferred to the see of Ramsbury when it was created c. 909. Charter evidence indicates that Brightwell was given to Winchester to help defray the cost of entertaining foreign dignitaries.²¹ Winchester's possession of a considerable patrimony in Wiltshire, anchored by King Offa's gift of a large estate at Downton, reflects the fact that this shire, too, had belonged in the diocese of Winchester before it was transferred with Berkshire to the bishopric of Ramsbury.²² Likewise, the bishop of London's tenancy of the estate of Barnes in Surrey may reflect earlier diocesan arrangements. Barnes is close to the Thames River, and bishops of London may have controlled some part of northern Surrey very early on.²³ Thus, when we find English bishops holding land outside their dioceses the reason is often rooted in the early diocesan structure.

In other cases, extra-diocesan holdings were probably the result of fluctuations in early Anglo-Saxon royal power. Although the bulk of Canterbury's lands were in Kent, Nicholas Brooks has suggested that two large and valuable manors in Surrey – Mortlake and Croydon – were granted before 760, when Mercian kings were unable to alienate land in Kent in their own right.²⁴ The 825 and 831 grants

¹⁹ Ayton and Davis, "Ecclesiastical wealth," 59.

²⁰ See the discussion of canons five and eleven of the Council of Chelsea (816) in Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, 193 and n. 6.

²¹ S 307. B. Yorke, "The bishops of Winchester, the kings of Wessex, and the development of Winchester in the ninth and early tenth centuries" in *Anglo-Saxon History*, 108–9.

²² *ECW*, 219; also S 312. The bishop of Winchester's other estates in Berkshire, Woolstone and Harwell, were probably later grants by lay men. The only charters associated with them (Woolstone – S 317, 503, 575; Harwell – S 672, 790, 856) are royal grants to kings' thegns, but which are nevertheless recorded in the *Codex Wintoniensis* grouped by estate. See A. Rumble, "The purposes of the *Codex Wintoniensis*," *Proceedings of the Battle Conference* 1981 (1982), 157.

²³ Barbara Yorke notes that the East Saxon province may once have included Surrey, as the place-name Surrey means the "southern district." She adds, however, that although the bishop of London had jurisdiction in seventh-century Surrey, by Bede's time the province seems to have transferred to the diocese of Winchester (B. E. A. Yorke, "The kingdom of the East Saxons," *ASE* 14 (1985), 28–9 and *HE*, iv, 6). See also J. Blair, *Early Medieval Surrey: Landholding, Church and Settlement Before 1300* (Stroud, 1991).

²⁴ Brooks, *Early History*, 106–7.

of the Middlesex estates of Harrow and Hayes, respectively, are perhaps evidence of additional Mercian benefaction.²⁵ Taunton in Somerset, according to Winchester tradition, was granted to the see early in the eighth century by Queen Frithugyth and augmented by King Æthelheard of Wessex in 737, despite the fact that the see of Sherborne, in whose diocese Somerset lay, had just been established.²⁶ More often than not, however, it is unclear how extra-diocesan holdings were acquired. Estates could only be granted where patrons had them to give, so recipients could not generally control where they were located. In short, beneficiaries had to take what they could get. A handful of extra-diocesan grants made by kings and laymen probably fall into this category. King Athelstan, for instance, gave estates in Wiltshire, Sussex and Surrey to the sees of Winchester, Canterbury and London, respectively, although the charters recording these grants are generally untrustworthy.²⁷ Winchester also received estates in Somerset, one from King Edgar in 975 and another from King Edward or his mother c. 1044, as well as two estates in Oxfordshire from the Ætheling Æthelstan in 1015 and King Edward in 1044.²⁸ Canterbury's eleventh-century royal grants also included land in Surrey and Oxfordshire given by King Cnut and Queen Emma.²⁹ Both Canterbury and Winchester received extra-diocesan estates from lay as well as royal benefactors. The former benefited from the generosity of tenth- and eleventh-century earls and thegns, who bequeathed the archbishop and his community estates in Suffolk, Sussex, Essex and Surrey, while the latter received lands in Wiltshire and Somerset.³⁰

In a few instances, bishops acquired lands situated beyond their dioceses through exchange with other bishops. Nicholas Brooks has suggested that Archbishop Oda of Canterbury received Pagham and Tangmere from the bishop of Selsey in return for helping him recover alienated lands, although Patrick Wormald posited that a more complex transaction lay behind this transfer.³¹ The circumstances behind the acquisition of the remaining extra-diocesan holdings

²⁵ Brooks, *Early History*, 105, although Brooks argues later that, in general, Canterbury suffered at the hands of King Offa (116–19). Harrow was being held by Earl Leofwine TRE but was an ancient Canterbury possession.

²⁶ S 254; see also *ECW*, 217 ff. Finberg thought that the actual grant of Taunton was reflected in S 373, a charter of questionable authenticity, which purports to grant privileges in Taunton in exchange for land in Somerset and Wiltshire (*ECW*, 222–3).

²⁷ Enford, Wiltshire (S 427) and West Tarring, Sussex (S 477 and 515; Brooks, *Early History*, 220–1). S 453 records Athelstan's confirmation of lands including Barnes in Surrey. Hart thought it a later fabrication whose witness list suggests a date of 961x71 (*ECE*, no. 15). Barnes does appear, however, on the list of estates dated c. 1000 (P. J. Taylor, "The estates of the bishopric of London from the seventh to the early sixteenth centuries," Ph.D. dissertation, London, 1976).

²⁸ Bleadon, Somerset (S 804, spurious); Pitminster (Emma's gift is recorded in *Annales Monastici*, II, 18, Edward's in S 1006); Adderbury, Oxfordshire (S 1503); Witney, Oxfordshire (S 1001).

²⁹ Cheam and Merstham, Surrey (S 1641); Newington, Oxfordshire (S 1229).

³⁰ Canterbury: Monks Eleigh in Suffolk from Ælfgar and Ælflæd (S 1483 and S 1486); perhaps also Hadleigh in Suffolk from Byrthnoth and his wife; Patching, Sussex (S 1631); Bocking, Essex from Æthelric of Bocking (S 1501), Stisted from the widow, Wulfgyth (S 1535), and perhaps Lawling from Byrthnoth and his wife (Brooks, *Early History*, 286); East Horsley, Surrey from Thoræd in 1036–8 (S 1222) and Walworth (S 1647). Winchester: Ham, Wiltshire in reversion (S 1533) and Stockton from Ealdorman Æthelwold (S 1504), and Rimpton, Somerset from Brihtric Grim (S 1512).

³¹ Brooks, *Early History*, 241–3. P. Wormald, "The strange affair of the Selsey bishopric," in *Belief and*

are, unfortunately, obscure. The bishop of Winchester held four estates valued at £30 in Cambridgeshire, a county in which the diocesan bishop (Dorchester) held nothing at all. Both Canterbury and Winchester held estates in Buckinghamshire, and Winchester another in Hertfordshire, for which there is no documentation. And it would be interesting to know why the bishop of Hereford was holding Writtle in Essex and Prestbury and Lydney in Gloucestershire, and the archbishop of York Tur Langton in Leicestershire TRE.

The value of Canterbury's and Winchester's extra-diocesan holdings was, at roughly 25 percent and 30 percent of their respective holdings, extraordinary.³² Given their prestige as the primatial see on the one hand and the royal church of Wessex on the other, however, it is not surprising that these two sees were able to accumulate resources well beyond their own borders. The fact they were reformed Benedictine communities may have also contributed to their interest in accumulating holdings across the realm. As we have seen, the other great Benedictine houses also held widely. A lack of interest on the part of smaller sees may have been a factor, but it seems more likely that most bishops simply could not attract kingdom-wide patronage the way that bishops of these two sees could.

Even within diocesan boundaries, episcopal wealth tended to be localized. The enormous diocese of Dorchester, for instance, was comprised of nine midland counties, yet more than half of its wealth was based on its Oxfordshire estates alone. Likewise, nearly half of Lichfield's wealth was located in its home shire of Staffordshire, despite the fact that the diocese took in all or part of four other counties. At Worcester and Winchester, more than half of the diocesan holdings were concentrated in the home shires of Worcestershire and Hampshire, respectively. And even higher percentages are recorded for the sees of York, North Elmham, Exeter and Hereford, where the dioceses encompassed all or part of only one other shire. One notable exception is Sherborne, which held more in Wiltshire than in its home county of Dorset, but this is because the Wiltshire holding was comprised of several very large and wealthy manors that Sherborne acquired only when the see was amalgamated with Ramsbury in 1058.³³

Several general observations emerge from the discussion thus far. The episcopal Church as a whole was quite wealthy, but that wealth was very unevenly distributed across the institution. The distance between the patrimony of the archbishop of Canterbury at the top of the scale and the bishop of Lichfield at the bottom was nothing short of astronomical if those values are taken as a measure of the level of pastoral care a community could provide, especially when the size of the diocese is taken into account.³⁴ This was surely not the case, however, as Lichfield's endowment, together with its rights in the city of Chester described in

Culture, 138–40. For Selsey's side, see S. D. Kelly, "The bishopric of Selsey," in *Chichester Cathedral. An Historical Survey*, ed. M. Hobbs (Chichester, 1994), 9–10.

³² Over the course of the eleventh century, Canterbury's percentage was actually lower because the total value used here, for the sake of consistency, does not include the substantial value of the estates alienated to earls in the late-Saxon period.

³³ London was exceptional as well, with a greater percentage of its holding in Essex rather than Middlesex.

³⁴ It should be noted, however, that population levels differed greatly across counties. Darby records, for example, a rural population of 9,780 for Hampshire versus 1,852 for Cheshire (Darby, *Domesday*

the next chapter, may have been enough for that purpose. Rather, the distinction was probably a measure of the power each wielded, both at home and in the wider political world. Kingdom-wide interests on the order of 25–30 percent of an endowment meant that bishops of these sees were very powerful men. As Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre have opined, “land, in a pre-industrial society, was the source of (very nearly) all wealth; put simply, wealth brought you power because it allowed you to reward armed men who in turn allowed you to acquire further wealth in a variety of ways and defend the wealth you had.”³⁵ In this sense, the sprawling estates of the rich communities brought them and their leaders much more than cash and renders; they brought them prestige in the wider world and a presence in local communities across England. Despite, however, the enormous wealth of the Church in general and sees like Winchester and Canterbury in particular, a consideration of the chronology of episcopal endowments suggests that even the most affluent were engaged in a long-term struggle to maintain, let alone augment, their holdings.

The Evolution of Episcopal Endowments

Aggregate numbers speak to the general prosperity of the later Anglo-Saxon Church, yet a closer look at endowment patterns suggests that tenth- and eleventh-century English bishops, like churchmen on the Continent, faced the growing problem of shrinking patronage. Throughout Europe at this time less land was available for alienation, so bishops increasingly faced competition, particularly from the abbots of great Benedictine houses, for dwindling patronage. They also had to contend with land-hungry laymen who used a variety of means to delay or block grants to churches that they or their families had already given.³⁶ The last 150 years or so of English rule, it turns out, were not years of growth but rather years of struggle, a period in which bishops spent considerable energy defending their patrimonies. Indeed, one of the fundamental features of the episcopal Church, which distinguished it from the monastic Church, was just how large a percentage of its pre-Conquest holdings it controlled by about 909, a point at which the process of West Saxon political consolidation was essentially complete and the most significant changes in the diocesan structure had taken place. Canterbury and Winchester, the two wealthiest and most prestigious sees, acquired around half of their pre-Conquest endowments before the turn of the tenth century – slightly more than half in the case of Canterbury and slightly less in the case of Winchester.³⁷ By themselves, these numbers suggest that both sees enjoyed continuous patronage throughout the Anglo-Saxon period,

England, Appendix 1). Inconsistencies in Domesday reporting notwithstanding, pastoral care in East Anglia required greater resources than it did in the west because it was more densely populated.

³⁵ Davies and Fouracre, *Property and Power*, 2.

³⁶ See below, chapter 6 and B. Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of St Peter. The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property 909–1049* (Ithaca, 1989).

³⁷ For more detailed analysis, see below, 139–42.

and that both sees were heavily patronized after 909. What these figures obscure, however, is the fact that a large portion of both bishoprics' net worth was based on a proportionally smaller number of estates. In other words, as much as half of Canterbury's pre-Conquest holding, by value, was acquired between the seventh and tenth centuries. But this figure is based on the contribution made by 40 percent of its ninety holdings. A closer look thus betrays the importance of gifts by various early Anglo-Saxon kings of large manors like Wingham in Kent, Hayes in Middlesex and South Malling in Sussex.³⁸ The inclusion of several large estates that Canterbury had lost by the ninth century only underscores the impression that grants to Canterbury after the tenth century, although greater in number, were smaller in value.³⁹ Such an impression corroborates Nicholas Brooks's conclusion that Canterbury's endowment in the seventh and eighth centuries was probably as great as its endowment in 1066, and that after 900 archbishops were engaged in a continual struggle to make gains keep pace with losses.⁴⁰

A chronological analysis of Winchester's endowment illustrates that early royal generosity was an even more significant feature in this see's economic development. Nearly half of Winchester's Domesday endowment had been acquired before the turn of the tenth century, but the number of estates that contributed to its early wealth was only about a quarter of the number of estates it was holding in 1066. The largest and most valuable of Winchester's holdings were acquired early in its history, massive estates such as Chilcomb, Alresford and Whitchurch in Hampshire, Downton in Wiltshire, Taunton in Somerset and Farnham in Surrey.⁴¹ This brief analysis of Canterbury's and Winchester's endowments, then, dramatically highlights the extent to which these sees were indebted to early Anglo-Saxon kings for the endowments they possessed on the eve of the Conquest.

If the two most prestigious English bishoprics had trouble augmenting, perhaps even maintaining, their endowments, the smaller, less prestigious sees were in an even more precarious position. When the discussion turns from Canterbury and Winchester to the other ancient sees, there is, not surprisingly, great variety. The endowment histories of London and Rochester, which were in closer proximity to Canterbury than the other sees, are similar to one another, despite the fact that London was much wealthier and possessed more than twice the number of estates as Rochester. Both were relatively small sees in terms of the geographical size of their dioceses, and each has a decent run of charters.⁴² Diplomatic evidence

³⁸ For the history of these estates, see Brooks, *Early History*, 106, 118–58.

³⁹ Cookham in Berkshire (110 hides) and Eynsham in Oxfordshire (300 hides).

⁴⁰ Brooks, *Early History*, 107.

⁴¹ Chilcomb (*ECW*, 216), Alresford (*S* 242), Whitchurch (*S* 378), Downton (*ECW*, 215), Taunton (*S* 254; *ECW*, 217) and Farnham (*S* 235 and 382). The remaining early estates are, in Hampshire: Easton (*S* 1275), Bishopstoke and Kilmeston (*ECW*, 216), Nursling (*S* 1277), Hurstbourne Priors (*S* 354), Highclere (*S* 258 and 259), Droxford (*S* 276), Martyr Worthy (*S* 273, *ECW*, 215), and Calbourne (*S* 274 and 281); in Berkshire: Brightwell (*S* 307); in Wiltshire: Alton Priors (*S* 272, 276 and 273) and Wanborough (*S* 312).

⁴² A reliable chronology of London's endowment is remarkably difficult to establish (see P. Taylor, "The endowment and military obligations of the see of London: a reassessment of three sources," *ANS* 14 (1991), 287–312).

suggests that more than 60 percent of London's Domesday estates probably originated as pre-tenth-century royal grants, including all of its Middlesex holding and four very large coastal estates in Essex.⁴³ Yet, unlike Winchester, the value of London's early estates corresponds rather closely to the number of estates contributing to that value: about 50 percent of the estates account for about 60 percent of the value. This suggests that London was not as successful as Winchester in making up for losses, and that its endowment stagnated in the later Anglo-Saxon period. The see of Rochester faced similar challenges.⁴⁴ Almost half of its endowment (by value) was acquired before 900.⁴⁵ The percentages are similar for the number of estates. It is worth noting, however, that of the thirty-two extant charters recording land grants, twenty-five pertain to the period before 880 and only seven thereafter. Early bishops of these two sees clearly benefited from royal patronage, but their successors had to scramble to maintain their endowments in the following centuries.

Early royal benefaction appears to have accounted for even greater percentages of some ancient sees' endowments. Indeed, the further away from London, Winchester and Canterbury, the greater the antiquity of episcopal endowments. Not surprisingly, where the percentages are the highest, the roots of the endowments can be traced back to the Roman and sub-Roman past. Sherborne's patrimony, for instance, was ancient.⁴⁶ Evidence of a Roman background exists for the estates of Sherborne and Halstock, and it is likely that several more followed the progression from Roman villa to minster church to episcopal estate.⁴⁷ All of the bishop's endowment in Dorset can be traced to the period before 900, as well as five of the estates in Dorset earmarked for the support of the monks.⁴⁸ These estates account for nearly a third of the see's pre-Conquest endowment, and the number would be quite a bit higher if the caput manor of Sherborne, which had

⁴³ S 5 is spurious grant for Tillingham, but probably based on a genuine tradition (Taylor, "The endowment and military obligations," 5). For St Osyth, Clacton and The Naze in Essex, see C. Hart, *The Danelaw* (Cambridge, 1992), 208. About the estates in Middlesex, there is a charter for Fulham (S 1785), while Stepney, Islington, and Stoke Newington were possibly part of the Tillingham grant (Taylor, "The endowment and military obligations of the see of London," 5). For the remainder, Taylor argues that "so large a gift is likely to have been made at an early date, and if it was not part of the early eighth-century grant of Fulham, it may well have been acquired at about the same time" (Taylor, "The endowment and military obligations," 46).

⁴⁴ No other bishopric has an equivalent number of genuine pre-Conquest documents; about forty charters are extant, only three of which are considered spurious (A. F. Brown, "The lands and tenants of the bishopric and cathedral priory of St Andrew, Rochester 600–1540," Ph.D. thesis, London, 1974, 3).

⁴⁵ Frindsbury (S 35, 36, 130), Trottiscliffe (S 129), Snodland (S 280 and 289), Cuxton (S 321), Halling (S 37), Wouldham (S 1458) and Borstall (S 165).

⁴⁶ K. Barker, "The early history of Sherborne," in *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland*, ed. S. Pearce, BAR British Series 102 (1982), 77–116 and M. O'Donovan, *The Charters of Sherborne* (Oxford, 1988).

⁴⁷ Pearce suggests Beaminster, Charminster and Yetminster (Pearce, *Kingdom of Dumnonia*, 75, 98–9).

⁴⁸ According to the *Registrum Osmundi*, a post-Conquest episcopal register, Charminster, Alton Pancras, Netherbury, Up Cerne, Yetminster, Lyme Regis and Beaminster in Dorset, and Chardstock in Devon belonged to the bishop TRE (*Vetus registrum Sarisberiense alias dictum Registrum Sancto Osmundi episcopi*, RS (1883–4), i, 198). The monks' early estates were Bradford Abbas, Compton, Stalbridge, Weston and Halstock (O'Donovan, *Charters of Sherborne*, xlv).

been leased late in the Anglo-Saxon period to Queen Edith, were included.⁴⁹ The importance of early benefactions is also obscured by the high value of three estates used to endow the see of Ramsbury when it was spun off from Winchester c. 909. The bishop of Sherborne probably only received them in 1058, when, as was mentioned, Bishop Herman of Ramsbury amalgamated the two sees. If these estates are removed from the calculation, the importance of Sherborne's early endowment stands out in high relief: fifteen of eighteen estates account for more than 90 percent of the TRE endowment. Only a few additions seem to have been made in the tenth and eleventh centuries.⁵⁰ It seems unlikely that later bishops of Sherborne turned patrons away, so it may have been that the relatively large size of their early endowment discouraged future royal patronage. In any case, it is clear that this southwestern see's pre-Conquest endowment was comprised predominantly of large, ancient and compact estates. It is also very likely that it reflected some continuity with the early British Church.⁵¹

Continuity between the British and the Anglo-Saxon Churches is reflected in the endowment histories of several other ancient Anglo-Saxon sees. Many of Worcester's estates, for instance, had histories of Romano-British, perhaps even Roman settlement.⁵² Given the general antiquity of the estate structure in the area, it is not surprising that the basic structure of Worcester's estate, which may reflect the endowment of the British Church in this area, was established by the 750s with royal grants in the Avon Valley, the Severn estuary, the Cotswolds, and northern Worcestershire.⁵³ In the following century and a half, the endowment established by early Hwiccan and Mercian kings was augmented so that in terms of Worcester's Domesday endowment, something on the order of 90 percent of its Domesday holdings had been acquired by the year 900. Included in this figure are five of Worcester's six estates in Gloucestershire, two of six estates in Warwickshire and most of the shire of Worcestershire.⁵⁴ It is thus impossible to

⁴⁹ The manor of Sherborne is not included because Queen Edith held it TRE, but it must have been one of the original grants to the see, represented perhaps by the 100 hides at *Lanprobi* given by Cenwalh of Wessex in the late seventh century and commemorated in a fourteenth-century Sherborne document (O'Donovan, *Charters of Sherborne*, xx). Barker favors this identification since the manor of Sherborne is not named as such in this list, but appears as substantially the same hidage in Domesday Book as *Lanprobi* does on the list. She further argues that Sherborne's original endowment was the double-estate hundred of Sherborne, the two parts of which are reflected in the monks' and the bishop's portions in Domesday Book (Barker, "The early history of Sherborne," 80–2).

⁵⁰ Bradford Abbas and Stalbridge (S 422–3), Thornford (S 516) and Osborne (S 813).

⁵¹ As Pearce observes, "in the eastern part of the peninsula the West Saxon kings inherited at least the nucleus of a Christian organization, involving established houses and local graveyard sites" (Pearce, *Kingdom of Dumnonia*, 110).

⁵² Christopher Dyer suggests that Northwick and Wick, Blockley, Hanbury, Westbury, Stratford, Bibury and Withington all had Romano-British roots. The last two contained the sites of Roman villas within their boundaries, while five had pagan cemeteries (C. Dyer, *Lords and Peasants in a Changing Society: the Estates of the Bishopric of Worcester, 680–1540* (Cambridge, 1980), 20–1).

⁵³ Fladbury (S 76), Stratford-on-Avon (S 198), Henbury (S 77), Bibury (S 1254), Withington (S 1429), Batsford (S 101), Woodchester (S 103), and Droitwich (S 102); Dyer, *Lords and Peasants*, 11.

⁵⁴ Kempsey (S 154 and 1833), Wick (S 142 and 1370), Bredon (S 1257), Ripple (S 52), Blockley (S 207), Tredington (S 55), Overbury (S S 216), Sedgeberrow (S 113), Shipston (S 61), Harvington (S 154 and 1261), Grimley (S 201), Hallow (S 179 and 180), Cropthorne (S 118), Hanbury (S 190), Alvechurch (S 117), Stoke Priors (S 60), Wolverley (S 211 and 212), Eardiston and Knighton (S 1185), Northwick and Hartlebury in Worcestershire (Dyer, *Lords and Peasants*, 11). Bishop's Cleeve (S 141), Westbury-on-

overstate the importance of early royal patronage for Worcester's endowment, perhaps facilitated by the availability of British ecclesiastical lands that may have been simply transferred over to English bishops after the region came under the control of Anglo-Saxon kings.

Because there are very few charters documenting the endowment histories of the ancient sees on the Welsh borderlands – Lichfield and Hereford – one can only speculate about the importance of early royal patronage to these sees. Both were, however, ancient: Lichfield had been established in the last quarter of the seventh century, while Hereford was probably spun off from Lichfield shortly thereafter. On the basis of their antiquity alone, we would expect a large percentage of their endowments to have been granted early, as was the case with Sherborne and Worcester. Lichfield had also been the seat of a short-lived Mercian archbishopric, so its endowment may have been augmented by its patron, King Offa.⁵⁵ It is therefore likely that anywhere from 40 to 100 percent of the see's endowment was in place before the tenth century. The conservative estimate is based on the Staffordshire estates alone: large, compact blocks of land surrounded by royal manors, which probably reflect part or all of the see's original endowment in the days of St Chad.⁵⁶ Similarly large, compact estates in Derbyshire and Cheshire were probably also early acquisitions, as well as the small holding of St John's, Chester, whose extramural site may point to late Roman origins.⁵⁷

The see of Hereford's endowment history is similarly obscure. A considerable portion of the land in this county was recorded as waste TRE, which means that the land was undervalued relative to its hidation. The Church of Hereford was, moreover, the apparent victim of predation by Harold, earl of Wessex.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, a conservative estimate of Hereford's endowment resulting from early royal benefaction could be anywhere from 70 to 95 percent, once again on a par with the other sees in the west. The bulk of Hereford's endowment lay close to the

Trym (S 146 and 1187), and Colesbourne (S 1262) in Gloucestershire; Hampton Lucy (S 120 and 1257) in Warwickshire. For Worcester's early endowment, see also S. Bassett, "Churches in Worcester before and after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons," *Antiquaries Journal* 69 (1989), 225–56 and P. Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England 600–800* (Cambridge, 1990), chapters 5 and 6.

⁵⁵ See C. J. Godfrey, "The archbishopric of Lichfield," *Studies in Church History* 1 (1965), 145–53 and Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, 232–3.

⁵⁶ Episcopal estates in Staffordshire tend to be structured as large blocks of land surrounded by royal manors, a configuration suggesting early settlement (C. F. Slade, "An introduction to the Staffordshire Domesday," in *VCH, Staffordshire* (London, 1958), iv, 8).

⁵⁷ The lands of churches dedicated to St Chad at Farndon and Wybunbury in Cheshire, Prees and Shrewsbury in Shropshire were probably also early gifts (A. Thacker, "The church in Cheshire," in *VCH, Cheshire* (London, 1979), i, 268–9). The bishops of Lichfield also had an interest in the minster of St Chad's, Shrewsbury, as we are told that "the same bishop had in this city 16 canons" in Domesday Shropshire (DB, i, 252r). The value of the lands is not included here because it is impossible to determine which supported the canons and which the bishop. St Chad's estates, which were worth only about £2 TRE, also appear separately from the bishop's in Domesday Book, probably because they were in the hands of Earl Roger in 1086 (A. T. Gaydon, *VCH, Shropshire* (London, 1973), ii, 114–15). The bishop's interest is perhaps represented by the one and a half hides the canons hold of him in Shelton.

⁵⁸ Because Harold's chaplain, Leofgar, was briefly the bishop of Hereford in 1056, it is impossible to evaluate the nature of Harold's acquisitions.

city itself, and in the east and southeast of the county. In any case, neither Lichfield nor Hereford seems to have experienced much in the way of gains after 900. At the same time, though, they were probably quite resilient in terms of significant losses, Earl Harold notwithstanding.

The endowment history of the bishopric of Selsey further highlights the importance of early royal benefaction: its entire Domesday endowment of almost £150 had been acquired by the end of the eighth century. It was mostly built on the gifts of monasteries and minsters by early kings and aristocrats, notably King Æthelwealh's grant of 87 hides that must have covered most of the Selsey peninsula. This grant purportedly transferred St Wilfrid's original monastery and its lands to the newly established bishopric of Selsey.⁵⁹ The see almost certainly acquired its remaining nine estates, six of which were minster churches, by the end of the eighth century.⁶⁰ Selsey's archive contains charters related to just three further grants won and lost over the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Although there is very little diplomatic evidence with which to work, it is likely that the last of the ancient Anglo-Saxon bishoprics – Dorchester, York and Durham – followed the same pattern of early royal benefaction. Both the size of Dorchester's estates and their geographical organization suggest that somewhere between 70 and 95 percent of its TRE endowment was acquired before the tenth century.⁶¹ York must also have acquired a significant number of its estates early on, but the history of northern England is so poorly documented that even a guess is hazardous. We do know that some of the archiepiscopal see's estates were acquired in the tenth and eleventh centuries, so removing them from consideration leaves about 50 percent of York's TRE endowment unaccounted for, and therefore perhaps of ancient origin.⁶² The evidence suggests that archbishops of York were, at times, deeply embroiled in the high politics of Northumbria,

⁵⁹ S 232 was written in the tenth century and gives the credit for this benefaction to Æthelwealh's murderer, Cædwalla (S. D. Kelly, *The Charters of Selsey* (London, 1998), lxii–lxv, 5–13).

⁶⁰ The minsters were Aldingbourne (S 45), Henfield (S 49), Bishopstone (S 158 and 1435), Ferring (S 48), Wittering (S 1184), and Bexhill (S 108) (Kelly, *Charters of Selsey*, lxxv–lxxviii). For Bishopstone, see D. Hazelgrove, "The Domesday record of Sussex," in *The South Saxons*, ed. P. Brandon (London, 1978), 202.

⁶¹ The figure of 70 percent includes all of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire estates, as well as a small Lincolnshire holding attributed to St Mary's, Lincoln, but excludes Louth, which was probably acquired by Bishop Wulfwig (DB, i, 345r and 375r). If the estates and churches in Bedfordshire, Leicestershire and Huntingdonshire, which may have derived from early royal benefaction to the see of Leicester, are included, the percentage is close to 95. The bishop of Dorchester's Oxfordshire holding probably formed an imperfect triple hundred, "a massive block nearly as large and perhaps as ancient as the king's," by the pairing of Thame (60 h.) with Great Milton (40 h.); Banbury (50 h.) with Cropredy (50 h.); and Dorchester (90 h.) with South Stoke (17 h.) (J. Blair, *An introduction to the Oxfordshire Domesday*, ed. A. Williams, et al. (London, 1990), 14 and *idem*, *Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1994), 111).

⁶² On the basis of charters and a list of lands drawn up by Archbishop Oswald c. 972 (S 1453), it is possible to remove from consideration as early grants Ripon (S 456), Southwell Minster and its lands (S 659 and 79), Sherburn-in-Elmet (S 712, a grant by Edgar to a lay man, presumably acquired by York between 963 and c. 972), Patrington (S 968), and three estates Oswald purchased: Newbald, Everingham and Helperby (S 1453). Otley and Copt Hewick are also mentioned in the list, but it is not clear whether they were acquired before 900, only that they had been alienated by c. 972.

sometimes working against West Saxon kings, so it may be that some of these kings, at least, avoided enriching them any further.⁶³

Although little can be said from the perspective of Domesday Book about the endowment of the last ancient see, Durham, reconstructions of its endowment history on the basis of narrative sources reveal that it, too, owed much of its prosperity in the central Middle Ages to the generosity of early northern kings.⁶⁴ Fortunately, the mid tenth-century community produced a remarkable text, the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, which includes a relatively detailed account of its endowment history. Eleventh-century additions to this text and other narrative sources shed some light on the strategies bishops of Durham employed to establish, maintain and augment their holdings. Already by the ninth century the see had accumulated a sizeable endowment from generous Northumbrian kings. Grants by seventh-century Bernician kings included Holy Island itself and adjacent lands, as well as a handful of monasteries and lands on both sides of the River Tweed.⁶⁵ King Ecgrith (670–85) increased the see's holdings with more grants on the Tweed and considerably further south, including interests in Yorkshire and Lancashire.⁶⁶ Additional grants by King Ceolwulf (resigned 737) and King Guthred (d. 895), including the latter's generous gift of the land between the Tyne and the Tees, gave the see control over a significant portion of county Durham as well by the turn of the tenth century.⁶⁷ Although grants would continue to trickle in, Durham clearly owed the bulk of its holdings to the generosity of northern, and not West Saxon, kings.⁶⁸

So far the discussion has demonstrated that a significant portion of the wealth held by English bishops on the eve of the Norman Conquest had been acquired through the generosity of early Anglo-Saxon kings. It is also clear that, as early as the ninth century, this generosity had begun to diminish in terms of the number of grants, their size and also their value. Although most of the ancient sees continued to receive some royal donations of land in the ninth century, both the number and value of these gifts decreased. The situation did not improve much in the tenth and eleventh centuries. In some places, like Selsey, Worcester, Sherborne and Dorchester, endowments appear to have changed very little after c. 900. Late

⁶³ See above, 64.

⁶⁴ For the reconstruction of Durham's endowment, I am indebted to Aird, *St Cuthbert*, chapter 1 and HSC, 72–118.

⁶⁵ Besides Lindisfarne itself, these probably included a composite estate near the "Bowmont Water," perhaps centered on Kirk Yetholm and comprised of twelve vills, as well as the monastery of Melrose (HSC, §3). The community may also have acquired a great deal more land in this period as the subsequent entry states its boundaries stretched from the Tweed south to the Warren Beck and in an arc north-west to the Blackadder and Leader Rivers, a large swathe of land (§4 and figure 2). The description is somewhat suspect because it includes Norham and Eglington, which appear as grants in later entries (§9 and 11).

⁶⁶ Crayke, York and Carlisle (HSC, §5); Cartmell and Gilling (§6); and Carham (§7). See also Aird, *St Cuthbert*, 15–21.

⁶⁷ Warkwork "with its dependencies" (HSC, §8); Woodhorn?, Whittingham, Edlington and Eglington (§11); land between the Tyne and Wear (§13). §19b records the purchase from King Guthred of a group of vills centered on Monk Hesleden on the coast of County Durham. See also Aird, *St Cuthbert*, 30–6.

⁶⁸ As Johnson South points out, many of its northern lands were lost by the tenth century as a result of changes in the political landscape of the north.

Anglo-Saxon bishops of these sees do not seem to have added much at all to their endowments, but there is also no evidence that their ancient holdings suffered much erosion. Nor did patronage cease altogether after c. 900. York, for instance, received Amounderness in Lancashire from King Athelstan, a grant of land measuring some 15 miles north to south and 25 miles east to west, an amount Cyril Hart has likened to an earldom in its size and the extent of its jurisdiction.⁶⁹ The other northern bishopric, Durham, received Bishop Wearmouth and its eleven dependencies from Athelstan.⁷⁰ Nearly half a century later, the archbishop of York was granted lands at Southwell in Nottinghamshire by Kings Eadwig and Edgar to establish and augment a minster there.⁷¹ London and Rochester each acquired several estates through royal gifts in the tenth century.⁷² And, over the course of the eleventh century, the story was much the same: a handful of royal grants were made to these ancient sees, but these were not boon years in terms of royal patronage.⁷³

Although the extent of land discussed above is impressive, the importance of early patronage is actually understated, as percentages computed on the basis of Domesday figures do not reflect the considerable losses that bishoprics incurred over the entire period. We are constrained here by the fact that only a few possess enough charters to construct a picture of the ebb as well as the flow of resources. In his study of endowment history of one of them – Worcester – Christopher Dyer noted that outright alienations and disputes over land were becoming commonplace by the ninth century.⁷⁴ Rather than documenting continuous patronage, early Worcester charters show that bishops were having difficulty augmenting, and in some cases even maintaining, their endowments. The reasons for the slow-down in benefaction were doubtless related to political changes taking place in this century, since there were few strong rivals for patronage before the Benedictine reform of the mid tenth century. Worcester had relied heavily on the generosity of eighth-century Mercian kings, Canterbury on early Kentish kings, and Durham on Northumbrian kings. As the power of these dynasties declined, so too, to some extent, did the fortunes of the bishoprics. Pressure exerted by the Vikings on royal coffers also adversely affected episcopal resources, as a run of nine Worcester charters for the period 840–75 indicates. These charters document the substantial payments in gold and moveable wealth that bishops paid to kings

⁶⁹ S 407. Hart added, however, that “probably the grant should be regarded more as one of jurisdiction than actual ownership of the individual villis within the territory” (*ECNE*, 117).

⁷⁰ *HSC*, §26. Aird, *St Cuthbert*, 42.

⁷¹ S 659 and 679.

⁷² London’s royal grant was the estate of Orsett (S 1794). If the substance of a spurious charter is correct, then London also received Belchamp St Paul’s and Wickham from Athelstan early in the tenth century (S 453; Whitelock, *EHD*, I, 339). Rochester’s royal grants were the estates of Malling (S 514) and Bromley (S 671).

⁷³ London received Chingford (S 1056) and perhaps Runwell and Heybridge (S 453); York received Patrington from Cnut (S 968) and Axminster from Edward (S 1161); Durham received Staindrop and Brompton from Cnut (*HSC* §32).

⁷⁴ Dyer, *Lords and Peasants*, 12–13.

and Vikings in order to safeguard their estates.⁷⁵ In the long run, though, the estates of many Anglo-Saxon churches fell prey to Viking raiders regardless.⁷⁶

It is also possible to reconstruct in greater detail the endowment histories of both Canterbury and Winchester, which shed light on the complexities involved in maintaining patrimonies. Neither could be considered typical Anglo-Saxon sees, if, indeed, any *were* typical. But the fact that these two premier sees were experiencing difficulties in attracting royal patronage after the ninth century suggests that there is something to be learned from an analysis of their gains and losses. To begin with Canterbury, the history behind the general figures cited above is one of survival rather than unabated prosperity.⁷⁷ Concealed behind the allocation of approximately 50 percent of its endowment to the periods on either side of the year 900, discussed above, are the great losses that Canterbury sustained over the entire period. According to Nicholas Brooks, Canterbury's seventh and eighth century endowment was probably composed of at least 125 sulungs in Kent and another 160 hides in Surrey. The estates in question were still in Canterbury's possession in 1066. To this group should be added Cookham (110 hides) and Eynsham (300 hides), both of which charter evidence indicates, had been acquired in the seventh or eighth century.⁷⁸ Based even on a conservative estimate, it is clear that Canterbury had built up a very large endowment by the end of the eighth century.

It is significant, however, that many of the seventy-odd ninth-century charters record the recovery of estates lost under King Offa of Mercia, rather than new acquisitions. Although the other Kentish see, Rochester, also suffered at the hands of Offa, Canterbury bore the brunt of his attack on the Church in Kent: Offa refused to restore the large estate of Cookham confiscated by Cynewulf, whom he had defeated, as well as another 44 sulungs in Kent that he had granted to the community. The archbishop of Canterbury was eventually able to secure the restoration of the 44 sulungs in Kent, but he had to cede the community's rights to Cookham in return for a similar number of hides elsewhere.⁷⁹ A brief period followed during which Canterbury's endowment was reorganized and augmented through gifts, exchanges and purchases.⁸⁰ During this period the archiepiscopal see also gained control of the Kentish minsters Reculver and Minster-in-Thanet, but the cost of their acquisition was high: the 300-hide manor of Eynsham as well as £120.⁸¹ When the Mercians lost control of Kent to the West Saxons, there followed a period of retrenchment, when archbishops concentrated on building up their endowment in Kent and divesting themselves of faraway estates.⁸² Good

⁷⁵ S 192, 193, 194, 196, 198, 206, 207, 208, 210, 1272 and 1278. Restoration of lands at Bredon, for example, apparently cost the bishop of Worcester £11 worth of plate as well as a gold ring and six horses (Dyer, *Lords and Peasants*, 12).

⁷⁶ See, for instance, Kelly, "The bishopric of Selsey," 6–8, and Brooks, *Early History*, 30–1.

⁷⁷ This discussion of Canterbury's endowment relies heavily on Brooks, *Early History*, 103–45, chapter 9.

⁷⁸ S 1258 and S 1436.

⁷⁹ S 1258. Brooks, *Early History*, 103–4, 117 and Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, 224–6.

⁸⁰ S 1613 and S 187, for example.

⁸¹ S 1436. Brooks, *Early History*, 104, 180–206.

⁸² Brooks, *Early History*, 138–9.

relations with West Saxon kings toward the middle part of the century meant, however, the restoration of some estates as well as the acquisition of new lands on the edge of the Weald and in Romney Marsh.⁸³ But in the end, Canterbury's endowment had suffered considerably through this period. The archbishops had paid dearly for control of the Kentish minsters, only to eventually lose them to West Saxon kings or Viking raiders. Already by the end of the ninth century, then, a large amount of land (300 sulungs, or one-quarter of the total landed wealth of Kent) had passed in and out of the see's control, several estates more than once. Although Canterbury's political entanglements, first with Kentish, then Mercian, and then with West Saxon kings were responsible for some of the fluctuations in its endowment, the same ebb and flow must have characterized many other early episcopal endowments. Canterbury's are simply more visible because so much of its archive survives.⁸⁴

The ambiguity of the charter evidence for the tenth century makes a detailed analysis impossible, but it does look as though few royal grants came to the see during this period. At best a handful of new estates were acquired, and most of these were not given by kings.⁸⁵ Rather, several estates were bequeathed to the community by lay men and women, and two others were acquired by Archbishop Oda from the bishop of Selsey.⁸⁶ That royal gifts of land had fallen off is corroborated by an analysis of the twenty-odd grants made to the archbishopric between 989 and 1066, only four of which can be attributed with any certainty to kings.⁸⁷ The archiepiscopal see may have found a patron in King Cnut, but this patronage was probably more spiritual in nature than economic. He may have granted the monks the port of Sandwich and restored their interests in Folkestone, but the evidence is problematic.⁸⁸ Two extant writs suggest that Canterbury was also able to enlist Cnut's support in recovering rights usurped by laymen and lands alienated through leases.⁸⁹ Indeed, the extent to which Cnut's patronage was important to Canterbury's livelihood is suggested by the fact that both Sandwich and Folkestone, among other estates, were alienated after his death. King Harold Harefoot appears to have rescinded the gift of Sandwich, at least for a time, while Folkestone was one of a handful of Canterbury estates altogether valued at about £270 that were in the hands of earls on the eve of the Conquest.⁹⁰ It would perhaps be a mistake, given the silence of the sources, to assume that all of these

⁸³ Brooks, *Early History*, 145 and 354, n. 54.

⁸⁴ For discussions of the relations between Mercian kings and episcopal property, see Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, 224–34 and Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature*, 154–68.

⁸⁵ See the (mostly spurious) charters, S 546, 398 and S 477.

⁸⁶ Meopham, Darenth and Monk's Eleigh were lay bequests (S 1511). For Tangmere and Pagham, see above, n. 31.

⁸⁷ Hollingbourne and Garrington (S 1503), Newington (S 1229) and Chartham (S 1047).

⁸⁸ S 1467; S 1643; Brooks, *Early History*, 292–4 and 300–1. Cnut's spiritual ties are suggested by the relics he donated, including those of St Ælfheah, and the gift of his crown to the community (see below, 163; for the relics, *HN*, 107–9).

⁸⁹ *Writs*, nos. 29 and 30.

⁹⁰ Brooks, *Early History*, 300–2. Earl Godwine held Sundridge, Langport, Saltwood and Folkestone in Kent (DB, i, 3r, 4v, 9v); Earl Tostig held Haddenham in Buckinghamshire (DB, i, 143v); and Earl Leofwine held Harrow in Middlesex (DB, i, 127r) and Halton in Buckinghamshire (DB, i, 143v).

alienations were made without the archbishop's consent, or to assume that the see received nothing in return, but the general picture for the eleventh century is one of predation rather than patronage.

Winchester, by comparison, appears to have been more successful than Canterbury in attracting royal patronage throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, although we are dependent here on a cartulary that is both late and interpolated.⁹¹ It is not, however, unlikely that lands surrounding the town itself were granted by early Anglo-Saxon kings, as the twelfth-century monks claimed. These probably included large estate complexes at Worthy and Chilcomb, and land in Downton, which lay further away.⁹² Portions of Winchester's lands along the Itchen and on the Isle of Wight were probably also early royal gifts.⁹³ And the large and valuable manor of Taunton probably also came to Winchester before the new see of Sherborne was established, although the evidence for this acquisition is problematic.⁹⁴ While it is impossible to reconstruct Winchester's early endowment on the basis of such late and interpolated evidence, it is nonetheless reasonable to accept Finberg's conclusion that "by the close of the eighth century, the bishop of Winchester and his *familia*, the clergy of Old Minster, were supported by a large group of estates in Hampshire, lying for the most part within a day's journey from the cathedral city, another large group in the Isle of Wight, and two important outliers in Wiltshire and Surrey."⁹⁵ In the first half of the ninth century, kings continued to patronize Winchester with grants of land, some of which probably came to the see when the West Saxon shire of Berkshire was added to the diocese of Winchester.⁹⁶

During the second half of the ninth century Winchester, like many other ecclesiastical communities, suffered as a result of the Vikings. Although their authenticity is questionable, two charters suggest that Winchester was having trouble paying the tribute due to the king from some of its estates.⁹⁷ The reduction by King Alfred of the large estate of Chilcomb's assessment to one hide corroborates the likelihood that Winchester was experiencing financial problems in the late ninth century.⁹⁸ The situation in the early tenth century was not much better, as bishops seem to have granted leases to several tenth-century kings against their

⁹¹ Winchester's charters are contained in the twelfth-century cartulary, the *Codex Wintoniensis* (London, BL, Add. 15350). Although it contains some genuine charters, many are either suspicious or downright spurious (see Rumble, "The purposes of the *Codex Wintoniensis*," 153–66).

⁹² *ECW*, 215–17.

⁹³ S 229; *Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, 84, in *ECW*, 216; *Annales Monastici*, II, 6.

⁹⁴ Finberg points to the fact that Winchester's tradition that King Æthelheard augmented his wife's gift of Taunton in Somerset is odd given that the queen was a constant companion of Bishop Forthere of Sherborne (*ECW*, 217). It is possible, however, that Taunton served as the seat in Somerset of a *chorepiscopus* of the bishop of Winchester. For Finberg's suggestion that the early tenth-century grant of immunities for Taunton was perhaps the actual donation, see *ECW*, 222–3.

⁹⁵ *ECW*, 219.

⁹⁶ S 354 is a spurious charter purporting to record the exchange of 100 hides in Cholsey, Berkshire, for two estates in Wiltshire and Hampshire. S 307 and 312 are spurious records of the acquisition of Brightwell in Berkshire and Wanborough in Wiltshire.

⁹⁷ S 358 and 359.

⁹⁸ *ECW*, no. 27 is a charter, now lost, but extant in 1643, which was written in the reign of Æthelred II. S 946 is a writ of Æthelred II confirming Alfred's charter.

will.⁹⁹ Winchester may indeed have experienced difficulty in recovering lands leased to kings, aristocrats and thegns. At least one interpolated charter invoked the early Council of Hertford's condemnation against the leasing of ecclesiastical property.¹⁰⁰ That Winchester's problems were ongoing is suggested by the early eleventh-century production of a series of purportedly earlier charters emphasizing the beneficial hidation of Chilcomb and the immunities of Taunton and Downton.¹⁰¹ This campaign to protect Winchester's claims to lands and immunities, in evidence throughout the late-Saxon period, betrays a high degree of anxiety over the state of the see's endowment as well as the muniments that were supposed to protect it.

Despite evidence of struggle, though, Winchester's gains were greater in number and value during this period than were Canterbury's. The kingdom's second wealthiest see received as many as fourteen estates in Hampshire and one each in Wiltshire and Somerset from tenth-century kings, estates worth about £230.¹⁰² Another eight estates in three counties, worth about £70, were granted by eleventh-century kings.¹⁰³ There is no obvious reason why the Old Minster at Winchester should have fared so much better in terms of continued royal patronage than Canterbury. From the tenth century onward, the community faced significant competition in its own backyard from new royal foundations.¹⁰⁴ But the Old Minster had close and ancient ties to the West Saxon monarchy, and there is no evidence to suggest that any of the late-Saxon kings, including Edward the Elder, abandoned it. Nor, apparently, did Winchester's endowment suffer predation by English earls to the extent of Canterbury's. Still, Winchester, like Canterbury, did struggle, and if the two wealthiest faced such challenges, it is hardly surprising that the majority of the other ancient sees appear to have found it almost impossible to attract royal patronage much beyond the late ninth century.

The degree to which tenth- and eleventh-century kings were less inclined to part with their estates can also be seen in the endowment histories of the sees created after 900. An argument could be made that the ancient sees held less interest for later kings because they were already, many of them, wealthy in their own right. But what about the new sees created out of the diocesan restructuring of c. 909? Their endowments appear to have been created largely from the transfer of estates from Winchester and Sherborne, as well as some royal

⁹⁹ S 1444 records the lease of Downton and Beddington to Edward, while S 589 records that King Eadwig forced the community to lease Alresford to a thegn. S 814 records its restoration by King Edgar.

¹⁰⁰ In Finberg's words, "whoever wrote these lines, the spirit that breathes through them is unmistakably that of Ethelwold, the ruthless autocrat" (*ECW*, 232).

¹⁰¹ S 376, 443 and 540.

¹⁰² Bishop's Waltham (S 372), Overton (S 824), Bentley (S 823), Chilbolton (S 427), Avington (S 699), Crondall (S 820), Alverstoke? (S 803), South Stoneham (S 942), Hinton (S 944), and Havant (S 837) in Hampshire; perhaps also Crawley, Houghton and Otterbourne (S 827) and Fareham (S 822), but the dates of these grants are uncertain because the charters record confirmations and/or restitutions. In Wiltshire, Enford (S 427) and in Somerset, Bleadon (S 804).

¹⁰³ Coomb in East Meon? (S 994), Millbrook (S 1008), Hoddington (S 1013) and Hayling (S 1153) in Hampshire; Westwood and Pitminster in Somerset (S 1006 and *Annales Monastici*, II, 18); and Witney and Adderbury in Oxfordshire (S 1001 and S 1503).

¹⁰⁴ See Yorke, "The bishops of Winchester," 107–20.

benefaction. Wells's largest manor in Somerset had once been part of the see of Sherborne's endowment.¹⁰⁵ The same was probably true for close to 90 percent of the bishopric of Exeter's Domesday holdings in Devon and Cornwall, which had once belonged to the sees of Crediton and St German's, respectively.¹⁰⁶ And, finally, the tenth-century endowment of the reconstituted East Anglian bishopric of North Elmham was doubtless based on two estates once belonging to the pre-Viking see – North Elmham in Norfolk and Hoxne in Suffolk.¹⁰⁷

Kings did make a few grants to these sees in the tenth century. Soon after its establishment, Wells exchanged with King Edward the Elder a minster in Plympton for several estates in Somerset.¹⁰⁸ The same king may also have given Wells the Somerset estates of Chew Magna and Kingsbury Episcopi.¹⁰⁹ In the case of North Elmham, whose archive does not survive, it is impossible to tell how most of its Domesday endowment was acquired. Some of the nine estates recorded in Domesday Book under the rubric *terra episcopi Tedfordensis ad episcopatum pertinens TRE* may have been carried over from the see's pre-Viking past, but, given the dislocations of the Viking period in East Anglia, it is likely that some of Elmham's Domesday estates were granted by tenth-century kings.¹¹⁰ Generally speaking, however, the first bishops of Wells, Crediton, Cornwall and North Elmham drew heavily on existing episcopal resources rather than royal patronage for the establishment of their endowments.

Where late Anglo-Saxon royal largess flowed more freely it seems to have done so for more personal reasons. The see of Wells, for instance, was singularly lucky to increase its endowment markedly over the eleventh century because of royal patronage. This was due primarily to the efforts of its last two pre-Conquest bishops, Duduc and Giso, both royal clerks of Kings Cnut and Edward the Confessor. Both attracted royal gifts of land, but Giso acquired a papal privilege and writs of Kings Edward and William, and Queens Edith and Mathilda as

¹⁰⁵ O'Donovan, *Charters of Sherborne*, xlv. S 1042, although spurious, conveys the size of Wells, probably once a minster church dedicated to St Andrew, in naming some fifty places that appertained to it (D. G. Shaw, *The Creation of a Community: the City of Wells in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), 14–18).

¹⁰⁶ According to Sherborne tradition, 35 hides in Crediton were in the see's possession by the mid eighth century, although the charter recording the grant (S 255) is a post-Conquest Exeter forgery (P. Chaplais, "The authenticity of the royal Anglo-Saxon diplomas of Exeter," *BIHR* 39 (1966), no. 8; O'Donovan, *Charters of Sherborne*, xiv, xlii). In Cornwall, at least two manors, Lawhitton and Pawton, were apparently occupied by churchmen functioning as *chorepiscopi* of the bishop of Crediton from 909 to 994, when the bishopric of Cornwall was formally established (Pearce, *Kingdom of Dumnonia*, 115–16 and H. P. R. Finberg, "Sherborne, Glastonbury, and the expansion of Wessex" in *idem*, *Lucerna* (Leicester, 1964)).

¹⁰⁷ For the significance of the last two bishops of Elmham to the endowment, see below, 149–50. For the early Church in East Anglia, see D. Whitelock, "The pre-Viking age church in East Anglia," *ASE* 1 (Cambridge, 1972), 1–22; T. Williamson, *The Origins of Norfolk* (Manchester, 1993) and S. E. Rigold, "The Anglian cathedral of North Elmham, Norfolk," *Medieval Archaeology* 6–7 (1962–3), 67–108.

¹⁰⁸ Wellington, Bishop's Lydeard and Ash Priors (S 380).

¹⁰⁹ For Chew Magna, see M. Costen, *The Origins of Somerset* (Manchester, 1992), 144; for Kingsbury Episcopi, see Hunter's comments in *Historiola*, 29.

¹¹⁰ The estates in question are Great Cressingham, Gaywood, Thornham, Tofts, Colkirk, Thornage with Saxlingham, Helmingham and Stratton. See D. Whitelock, "The conversion of the eastern Danelaw," *Saga Book of the Viking Society* 12 (1937–45), 159–76.

well.¹¹¹ Bishop Leofric of Exeter, Giso's colleague in the royal chapel, also used his connections with the court to recover lands belonging to his see. According to Exeter tradition, fire destroyed the monastery's archive in 1003, and as a result of this and other misfortunes, only one hide of land still belonged to the community when Leofric moved the see of Crediton and Cornwall to Exeter in 1050.¹¹² Leofric's recovery of seven estates suggests powerful royal patronage.¹¹³ Giso and Leofric were, after all, churchmen trained in the king's chapel, doubtless more familiar with the legal process and better able to exploit it and their proximity to the king. At pre-Conquest Elmham, by contrast, it was the patronage of the well-heeled family to which the last two English bishops of that see belonged which was responsible for the health of the see's endowment, and not the last few Anglo-Saxon kings.¹¹⁴

What we have seen so far, then, is that the landed resources of late Anglo-Saxon bishops compared favorably to those of kings, aristocrats and abbots, but that the sees owed their endowments primarily to the beneficence of early Anglo-Saxon kings. Both in terms of value and number of estates, the earliest centuries were clearly the boon years. Several sees received next to no royal patronage in the last two centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period, while some continued to receive sporadic, yet increasingly less valuable gifts. The sees that continued to benefit from significant royal patronage were Canterbury and Winchester as well as the sees whose bishops enjoyed personal relationships with kings. No simple explanation for the downturn in royal land grants exists, although recent studies of the mechanism of gift-giving have suggested that ecclesiastical foundations were not as integral to the exercise of state power in the central Middle Ages, and therefore no longer the focus of royal benefaction.¹¹⁵ This may or may not hold true for tenth- and eleventh-century England, and native economic trends will be considered in more detail below, but it certainly bears consideration. Other factors, largely unrecoverable, also determined individual gift-giving. Indeed, when we consider the evidence for royal disfavor, the importance of personal relationships stands out even more clearly. Losses attributed to royal disfavor are especially difficult to identify in the sources, as churchmen were understandably less likely to record them, but a few isolated references should suffice. King Athelstan's extensive grant of lands at

¹¹¹ Duduc was granted Congresbury, Banwell and St Peter's, Gloucester by Cnut (*Historiola*, 15–16), while Giso acquired parts of the royal manors of Cheddar (Wedmore) and Milverton from Edward and Edith (S 1115 and 1240). See S. Keynes, "Bishop Giso of Wells (1061–88)," *ANS* 19 (1997), 203–71.

¹¹² S 954, although spurious, is probably correct about the fire because, as Chaplais argues, no community would otherwise admit to the loss of its charters (Chaplais, "The authenticity," 4–5). See also JW, s.a. 1003.

¹¹³ St Marychurch, Culmstock, Stoke Canon, Salcombe Regis, 'Brightston' and Branscombe (Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter*, Appendix V).

¹¹⁴ See below, 149–50.

¹¹⁵ A-J. Bijsterveld suggests this began to happen in the later eleventh, early twelfth centuries, but his view is pan-European ("The medieval gift as agent of social bonding and political power: a comparative approach," in *Medieval Transformations. Texts, Power and Gifts in Context*, ed. E. Cohen and M. B. de Jong (Leiden, 2001), 144–7). The earlier consolidation of the English state might suggest an earlier date for the transition in England.

Episcopal Wealth

Amounderness to the archbishop of York, for example, was rescinded when Archbishop Wulfstan I sided with the king's enemies.¹¹⁶ Toward the end of the tenth century, King Æthelred's animosity toward Bishop Ælfstan of Rochester doubtless resulted in the stagnation of this see's endowment.¹¹⁷ And, finally, Domesday Book records that the bishop of London's ancient manor of Southminster had been confiscated by King Cnut, along with the relics of St Ælfheah, doubtless as punishment for the bishop's lack of political support.¹¹⁸ Although royal predation of episcopal lands was probably less common than aristocratic predation, Anglo-Saxon kings did punish recalcitrant ecclesiastical lords from time to time by taking back what was once theirs.

Aristocratic Friends and Patrons

Bishops did not simply rely on the generosity of kings for their livelihoods; they also counted among their friends and patrons lay men and women of all ranks from the lowliest thegns to the greatest earls. Such patronage, while never as significant as royal patronage, nevertheless helped to make up for dwindling royal interest, particularly in the later Anglo-Saxon period. Diplomatic evidence indicates that at least ten of Winchester's Domesday estates in Hampshire and nine others in Berkshire, Wiltshire and Somerset, altogether worth some £200, were granted by lay men and women after 900.¹¹⁹ Canterbury, too, received lay bequests and grants over the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries, at least nine in Kent, Suffolk, Essex and Surrey.¹²⁰ Altogether these lay donations amounted to about £130, or 10 percent of the archiepiscopal see's landed wealth in 1066. Evidence of lay gifts to other sees is uneven. The see of London in the last century and a half of the pre-Conquest period seems to have received only three lay donations, the archiepiscopal see of York two, and Rochester four estates through the gift of a single aristocratic family.¹²¹ The latter gift, however,

¹¹⁶ Whitelock, "The dealings of the kings," 71–3.

¹¹⁷ According to Sulcard, who was writing in the late eleventh century, the king used to say that he would punish the bishop severely if he could only apprehend him (Keynes, *Diplomas*, 179).

¹¹⁸ M. K. Lawson, *Cnut. The Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (London, 1993), 155. Cnut may also have taken Holland and Shopland, and part of Chich (Hart, *The Danelaw*, 219), perhaps because Bishop Ælfwig supported the election of Edmund.

¹¹⁹ In some cases, the charter refers to a grant by a king to a lay man; since Winchester holds these estates TRE, it has been assumed that they were acquired sometime between the date of the original grant and 1066. Chilton (S 1524), Twyford, *bis* (S 827), West Meon (S 754), Yavington (S 1284), W. Tisted (S 511), Ecchinswell (S 412), Poolhampton (S 970), Hannington (S 960) and Wooton (S 874) in Hampshire; Woolstone (S 575) and Harwell (S 856) in Berkshire; Fonthill (S 1284), Fyfield (S 800), Ham (S 1533), 'Elingdon' (S 1485), Overton (S 449) and Stockton (S 1504) in Wiltshire; and Rimpton (S 1512) in Somerset.

¹²⁰ Meopham and Darenth (S 1511, although Darenth was bequeathed in this will to Rochester; it is not known how or when Canterbury acquired it) and Ickham in Kent (S 1506). For the lands outside Kent, see note 30.

¹²¹ London's estates were all in Essex: Rayne and Copford and were bequeathed by Æthelric of Bocking (S 1501) and Barling by Leofwine, son of Wulfstan (S 1522). Sherburn-in-Elmet and Newbald, Yorkshire, were granted to lay men in 963 (S 712 and 716), but they appear on a archiepiscopal list c. 972, and so must have been acquired sometime between these two dates (S 1453). And Beorhtric and his

comprised about 15 percent of the see's total endowment on the eve of the Conquest.

On the basis of diplomatic evidence, it would appear that tenth- and eleventh-century aristocrats and thegns were largely uninterested in patronizing episcopal communities other than Canterbury and Winchester. But lay patronage is, in many ways, more difficult to identify than royal patronage. In the first place, charters recording aristocratic and thegnly gifts of land to the Church were becoming increasingly rare in the tenth and eleventh centuries. With very few exceptions, the charters recording the gifts just enumerated survive only in post-Conquest cartularies. In the case of the Winchester cartulary, more than half of the charters relating to estates given by lay men document only how the lay men came by their estates, and not how the Old Minster came to possess them.¹²² The same was true of Sherborne's cartulary.¹²³ Keeping charters in this way suggests that important changes were taking place in the way title to land was bolstered in the eleventh century, but it makes it very difficult to assess the impact of lay patronage. It may be that, more than a century before Domesday Book, oral testimony and collective memory were the devices used by thegns to secure their title, making charter production among this group superfluous.¹²⁴

Christ Church, Canterbury's post-Conquest cartulary presents further problems because so many of this text's "charters" were not based on charters at all. As Robin Fleming has shown, many of the documents in this cartulary, particularly those dating from the eleventh century, were fabricated by a compiler who relied not on single sheets but primarily on the community's obituary lists as his source of information for lay benefactions.¹²⁵ They appear to be charters because the compiler drew dating, dispositive and sanction clauses from originals in the see's archive. Necrologies are also potentially useful sources for lay patronage but they, too, present significant challenges. In the first place, very few survive, and of those that do, most are frustratingly spare of detail beyond the dates of patrons' deaths.¹²⁶ The most significant drawback, however, is that they only include the names and sometimes gifts of donors who continued to be commemorated in the community's liturgy. Thus, patrons who, for a variety of reasons, were no longer enrolled in a community's necrology disappeared from its corporate memory, along with the details surrounding their gifts. Although, for example, we know from other sources that Ealdorman Ælfgar and three members

wife's grant of Denton, Longfield, and Darenth is S 1511 (Darenth, it should be recalled, was in the hands of Canterbury).

¹²² Of the fifteen charters and wills documenting Winchester's lay patronage in the tenth and eleventh centuries, only two survive in single sheets (S 449 and 1533); seven record royal grants to thegns (S 511, 575, 754, 800, 856, 874 and 960), one to an abbot (S 412) and the other to an ealdorman (S 970).

¹²³ See O'Donovan, *Charters of Sherborne* and F. Wormald, "The Sherborne 'Cartulary'," in Fritz Saxl: *A Volume of Memorial Essays*, ed. D. J. Gordon (London, 1957), 101–19.

¹²⁴ R. Fleming, *Domesday Book and the Law. Society and Legal Custom in Early Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1998), 56–67.

¹²⁵ R. Fleming, "Christ Church Canterbury's Anglo-Norman cartulary," in *Anglo-Norman Political Culture and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, ed. C. W. Hollister (Woodbridge, 1996), 91–3.

¹²⁶ The *Liber Vitae* of Durham and necrologies from Exeter and Worcester contain only names (*Die Gedenküberlieferung der Angelsachsen*, ed. J. Gerchow (Berlin and New York, 1988), 304, 338–40).

of his family were valued patrons of Christ Church, Ælfgar himself was excised from the obituary lists along with the details of his grant of Eleigh.¹²⁷ Doubtless many of the lay patrons of Anglo-Saxon churches, particularly those whose political careers ended traumatically, were similarly expunged from liturgical records when it became problematic to continue formally commemorating them in the new, post-Conquest regime. Virtually all that can be said is that a handful of middling thegns, including Thurstan, Æthelweard, Leofstan, Ælfnoth, Godwine and his wife, and Leofchild, emerge from the folios of Canterbury's obituary lists as patrons.¹²⁸ With the exception of Durham's house history, very little narrative evidence exists to illuminate lay patronage of episcopal sees. This text describes the extent to which St Cuthbert's community benefited from its close relationships with local families, several of which made generous grants in the early eleventh century.¹²⁹

Based on these observations about the extant evidence for lay grants, it seems likely that lay patronage, in terms both of land and of other gifts, is drastically underrepresented. It is also remarkably difficult, on the basis of this evidence, to differentiate between leases and reversionary gifts. For Worcester this is less of a problem: the care shown by the late tenth- and early eleventh-century community to record the details of leases made it relatively easy for them to recover lands alienated around the time of the Conquest. But in Canterbury's case, a general lack of systematic record keeping in the early to mid eleventh century made its recovery of lands either leased to or stolen by a handful of powerful English aristocrats much more difficult.¹³⁰ Only Domesday Book mentions, for example, that the "gifts" of Alsige and Ulfggrimr of their lands in Lindsey to the bishop of Dorchester's church of St Mary's, Lincoln, netted the pair £160.¹³¹ These are the kinds of details that are generally unrecoverable, making any discussion of aggregate wealth or patronage impressionistic indeed.

Wealthy Bishops and their Sees

For some episcopal communities, the appointment of a wealthy bishop must have made all the difference between pinching pennies and living prosperously. While the origins of most English bishops are obscure, it is clear that some were quite rich, and that they used their personal resources to provide for their communities.¹³² Estimates of the net worth of Archbishop Stigand, who must have been

¹²⁷ Fleming, "Christ Church Canterbury's Anglo-Norman cartulary," 104.

¹²⁸ S 1530; 1506; G, Nones January, 9 Kalends April, Kalends June, Kalends July and 15 Kalends August (R. Fleming, "Christchurch's sisters and brother: an edition and discussion of Canterbury obituary lists," in *The Culture of Christendom: Studies in Medieval History in Memory of Denis L. T. Bethel*, ed. M. Meyer (London, 1993), 126–30).

¹²⁹ Darlington and dependencies by Styr, son of Ulf, father-in-law of Earl Uhtred (*HSC*, §29); Sedgfield and vills by Snaculf, son of Cytel (*HSC*, §30); Aird, *St Cuthbert*, 47–9.

¹³⁰ Fleming, *Domesday Book and the Law*, 56–61; D. Bates, "The land pleas of William I's reign: Penenden Heath revisited," *BIHR* 51 (1978), 1–19.

¹³¹ F 1042.

¹³² Most of the evidence for this is quite late, but the *HSC* records that Ecgréd, the early ninth-century

virtually unrivalled in terms of wealth, top out at a staggering £750.¹³³ Bishop Ælfwold of Crediton (998–c. 1008) was also enormously wealthy, and while it is impossible to calculate his total net worth, the provisions of his will afford some sense of the magnitude of his fortune. By my calculation, Ælfwold granted, besides estates, one ship, fourteen horses, four shields and spears, three helmets, eight coats of mail, two dorsals, five books, three tents, two wall-hangings, three seat covers, a cope, bedgear, and a chalice and paten worth 120 mancuses less three. The will also includes bequests of mancuses of gold totaling 165 plus £5 each to his household servants.¹³⁴ One wonders how Bishop Ælfwold's personal wealth compared to that of other Anglo-Saxon bishops; it may have been extraordinary, but perhaps not. The see of Crediton was not particularly well endowed, so it may be that bishops like Ælfwold were appointed largely because they possessed the personal resources to offset small endowments. Only a few other episcopal wills survive, making it extremely difficult to judge the impact of family connections on episcopal resources. The aforementioned Ælfwold's will includes a bequest to his see of Crediton of "land at Sandford . . . for his soul-shot (sic), with meat and with men as it stands, except penal slaves." Given his wealth, this seems quite stingy. The tenth-century bishop of London, Theodred, bequeathed four estates to St Paul's, and Ælfsige bishop of Winchester several estates, in reversion, to the Old Minster.¹³⁵ Only two episcopal wills are extant from the eleventh century, that of Archbishop Ælfric of Canterbury, who died c. 1005, and that of Bishop Ælfric of North Elmham (which of the two bearing that name, however, is not clear). The former bequeathed three estates to Christ Church, while the latter left only fenlands in Norfolk and Suffolk to his see, bequeathing most of his estates to friends, family and the monks of Bury St Edmunds.¹³⁶ After the 970s, it seems likely that monastic bishops tended to favor reformed monasteries with their patronage, but this is only a guess based on a few wills.

Other sources corroborate the generosity of some bishops to their own communities. Charters indicate, for example, that between 989 and 1066 Canterbury received at least seven estates from its archbishops, accounting for approximately a quarter of the total number of its acquisitions during this period.¹³⁷ Likewise, a post-Conquest charter reveals that Leofric of Exeter sought and received the king's permission to grant three of his own estates to his see after having secured the return of some fifteen estates that had passed from the see's possession

bishop of Lindisfarne, gave his see several large manors on either side of the Tyne, including Jedburgh, Gainford and Billingham (*HSC*, §9). He may also have given the community the monastery at Norham and its lands, but there is some evidence earlier in the text that the see had received this earlier.

¹³³ Stigand's holdings were spread across ten counties (Smith, "Archbishop Stigand," 204).

¹³⁴ *Crawford Collection*, no. 10.

¹³⁵ Theodred's estates were St Osyth, Southery, Tillingham and Dunmow (*Wills*, no. 1). His will also includes a cash bequest of £10 to the episcopal demesne at Hoxne. Æthelsige granted Ringwood outright to Winchester, but he bequeathed Crondall and Tichborne only after the lives of Æltheah and Wulfic Cufing, respectively (*Wills*, no. 4).

¹³⁶ Archbishop Ælfric's gifts included Westwell, Bourne and Risborough (*Wills*, nos. 18 and 26).

¹³⁷ Ælfheah and Lyfing two each (S 1640; 1641); Eadsige several (S 1465); and Æthelnoth one (S 1389).

illegally.¹³⁸ That the penultimate bishop of Wells, Duduc, brought considerable wealth with him is recorded in the autobiographical tract of his successor, Giso; here we are told that Duduc gave to God and to St Andrew the possessions he was given by King Edward before he became bishop, possessions that the tract is careful to say he held by hereditary right (*hæreditario jure*). It also declares that Duduc's gifts, which purportedly amounted to everything he possessed, were bestowed on the community just before he was appointed bishop (*imminente die vocationis suæ*).¹³⁹

By far, however, Exeter's association with Leofric's successor, Osbern, brought the community its greatest acquisition. In 1086, the see was holding the church of Bosham, which Edward the Confessor had granted to his royal chaplain (and kinsman), a church whose lands were worth a staggering £300 in Domesday Book.¹⁴⁰ Although post-Conquest, this example demonstrates the importance of kinship ties to the prosperity of episcopal communities. Most bishops could not claim kings as their kinsmen, as was the case here, but many were aristocrats and thegns of local importance. Bishop Oswald of Worcester's leases to various members of his family constituted about one-quarter of the total hides he leased out between 962 and 961.¹⁴¹ These leases doubtless helped to secure the support of his extended family in the administration of his diocese and in his bid for independence from comital and even royal interference in Worcester. Æthelmær, the last Anglo-Saxon bishop of Elmham, appears to have similarly increased his see's patrimony. Although perhaps not typical, his pontificate demonstrates how a wealthy, local man, when appointed bishop, could radically alter the fortunes of his see through his personal wealth and his social standing. When Æthelmær took over this see from his brother, Stigand, he appears to have set about increasing its endowment. First he gave the see the estate of Blofield, which had come to him as a marriage gift from his wife, presumably before he became bishop of Elmham.¹⁴² He subsequently purchased two estates for the see, one of them from the holdings of Earl Ælfgar.¹⁴³ Stigand apparently remained active in local affairs, perhaps looking out for the interests of his former see: at some point he acquired Hemsby and gave it to his brother.¹⁴⁴ And in the case of Langley, Æthelmær held it jointly with a local man named Anand, "his companion"; the bishop seems to have taken complete possession of the estate and given it to the see only after Anand died a

¹³⁸ The lands Leofric donated included Bampton in Oxfordshire and Dawlish and Holcombe in Devon (*Regesta*, I, no. 138). The estates he recovered were Culmstock, Branscombe, Salcombe, St Mary Church, Staverton, Sparkwell, Marshall, Sidwell's lot, Brightston, Topsham, Stoke, Sidbury, Newton, Norton, and Clist (Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter*, Appendix V).

¹³⁹ *Historiola*, 15–16.

¹⁴⁰ DB, i, 17rv.

¹⁴¹ V. King, "St Oswald's tenants," in *St Oswald*, 108–10; A. Wareham, "Saint Oswald's family and kin," in *idem*, 53–63.

¹⁴² DB, ii, 194b–c. There is no indication that Æthelmær was married during his pontificate, nor was reference made to his marriage in the reports of his deposition.

¹⁴³ Beighton and Gunton (DB, ii, 194a–b).

¹⁴⁴ "Earl Algar held Hemsby TRE and Æthelwig [sheriff of Thetford] bought it. Stigand took it away and granted it to his brother Æthelmær, but the hundred does not know how" (DB, ii, 195a–b).

sudden death.¹⁴⁵ Æthelmær's position as a wealthy local man quite apart from his clerical office is underscored by his possession of several churches in Norwich and Yarmouth, which were probably part of his personal patrimony.¹⁴⁶ His connections, not to mention his personal wealth, were doubtless invaluable to the community at North Elmham, whose resources were modest, especially considering the density of population in East Anglia. Royal patronage played almost no role in the prosperity of this see, while this one family increased its pre-Conquest endowment by more than half its original value. Here it was obviously the relationship between the bishop, his family and local landowners that made the difference between poverty and prosperity.¹⁴⁷

Interpreting the Evidence

The evidence presented so far suggests that kings, queens, earls and thegns grew less interested in patronizing episcopal communities in the tenth and eleventh centuries. This may well have been the case, especially when we consider the often lavish attention paid by some lay families to monastic communities beginning in the third quarter of the tenth century.¹⁴⁸ The appointment of a well-heeled bishop who turned out to be generous could go a long way toward offsetting diminishing patronage.¹⁴⁹ But because few episcopal wills or charters survive, it is difficult to estimate the impact of personal wealth on episcopal patrimonies. In terms of lay patronage, the picture, as we have seen, was not completely bleak: grants did continue to trickle in, particularly to the larger and more prominent sees. They were, however, noticeably smaller in size and value. It is tempting to read into this trend a change in attitudes towards the episcopal Church, but if we consider broader economic issues a more significant pattern suggests itself. Sometime in the ninth century, lords both lay and ecclesiastical began to break up large estates in order to reward their followers with smaller holdings of 5 or 10 hides.¹⁵⁰ By the middle of the eleventh century, the English landscape had been

¹⁴⁵ DB, ii, 195b–196c.

¹⁴⁶ Æthelmær held the church of St Simon and St Jude in Norwich, valued at 20 s. (DB, ii, 117b) and the church of St Benedict in Yarmouth, also worth 20 s. (DB, ii, 118a–b).

¹⁴⁷ Yet Barlow wrote of the see of Elmham that it was “rather poor [and its] bishops in general undistinguished” (Barlow, *English Church* I, 216–17).

¹⁴⁸ Major rivals for patronage in the tenth and eleventh centuries included the royal foundations of New Minster, Winchester and Westminster; reformed monasteries and nunneries such as Bury St Edmunds, Glastonbury, Peterborough, Ely, Abingdon, St Albans, Evesham, Barking and Wilton; family monasteries such as Ramsey, Tavistock, Eynsham, Cerne, Coventry, Deerhurst, Pershore, Abbotsbury and Burton; and the new secular (re)foundations of Waltham Holy Cross and Stowe St Mary's, both of which were founded and endowed by eleventh century earls.

¹⁴⁹ This was perhaps Edward the Confessor's motivation for appointing Leofwine, abbot of Coventry, to the desperately poor see of Lichfield in 1053. Leowine was a kinsman of Earl Leofric of Mercia, and he was succeeded at Coventry by the earl's nephew, Leofric. Leofric's control of several other Mercian abbeys besides his own gave the bishop access to a broad network of power and wealth in this region (Lewis, “The Welsh borders,” 7).

¹⁵⁰ For what follows I am indebted to R. Fleming, “Lords and labour,” in *From the Vikings to the Normans*, ed. W. Davies (Oxford, 2003), 107–13, which neatly describes this process and its ramifications. See also R. Fleming, “The new wealth, the new rich, and the new political style in late

completely transformed by the division of these great estates into smaller, compact and more directly exploited parcels. As holders of great estates themselves, as well as beneficiaries of lay gifts, episcopal communities were not immune from the effects of this process. Oswald's partial dismantling of Worcester's patrimony to set up thegny tenants, and the gradual decrease in the size of lay grants to all churches, both reflect the ways in which the episcopal Church was caught up in the economic and social transformation of the English countryside. In short, lay gifts changed not because the episcopal Church necessarily fell out of favor, but because the nature of the gifts lay men had to grant to the Church changed with the new economy.

At the same time that the nucleation and manorialization of the English landscape were changing the shape of patrimonies, ecclesiastical as well as lay, concurrent developments in the kingdom's monetary and tax systems made it more important than ever to extract cash as well as crops out of them. By the late Anglo-Saxon period, landowners were burdened with the need to pay a tax of 24d. on every hide of land.¹⁵¹ Like other great lords, bishops presumably extracted cash from their smaller, reorganized estates in order to pay their taxes, contributing to the development of the market economy in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Indeed, the aggressive acquisition of urban property by bishops in the tenth and eleventh centuries is a reflection of their participation in the increasingly monetarized economy. Unfortunately, the urban holdings of bishops and their communities are unevenly recorded in Domesday Book because towns in general are so poorly recorded. So it is, once again, impossible to paint a complete picture. Still, the evidence that we do have reflects a genuine interest on the part of English bishops in cultivating and maintaining a presence in as many towns as possible, not just for economic purposes but because a presence in towns was increasingly a means of projecting power in the region. Thus, as the next chapter will show, they sought to acquire not only property, but also the rights to justice and commerce typically held by kings and earls.

It will come as no surprise that, as far as the evidence goes, the archbishop of Canterbury held the most numerous and widespread urban interests: he is recorded in Domesday as having tenements and burgesses in six shires TRE, although his presence was strongest, of course, in Kent. The archbishop dominated the see town of Canterbury with 116 burgesses and eighty-seven messuages; the only other landlords of substance were the king, with fifty-one burgesses, and Osbern Bigge, with fourteen.¹⁵² Another 342 burgesses and forty-nine tenements, including his seventeen tenements in London, gave the archbishop a presence in towns in Sussex, Middlesex, Surrey, Berkshire and Oxfordshire.¹⁵³ Even though Domesday Book reports the value of these rights

Anglo-Saxon England," *ANS* 23 (2001), 1–22 for a detailed consideration of aristocratic consumption, a reflection of this transformation.

¹⁵¹ Fleming, "Lords and labour," 121–2.

¹⁵² DB, i, 3–5; R. Fleming, "Rural elites and urban communities in late-Saxon England," *Past & Present* 141 (1993), 11–12.

¹⁵³ Lewes and Chichester (DB, i, 16v); London and Southwark (30v), Wallingford (56rv); and Oxford (154).

and holdings inconsistently, they were clearly an important component of the archbishop's income.¹⁵⁴ Thirteen other bishops held urban interests, some very considerable and some more modest. Among those with considerable interests were the bishop of Sherborne (Ramsbury), who held men and property in eight towns in Berkshire, Wiltshire, Hereford and Dorset; the bishop of Dorchester, who held in six towns in Berkshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire and Oxfordshire; and the bishop of Worcester, whose impressive holding in his see town of Worcester was compounded by rights and tenements in three towns in Gloucestershire and the shire town of Warwick.¹⁵⁵ The bishop of Winchester held in five towns in Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Somerset, the bishop of Hereford in four towns in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire, and the bishop of Lichfield held in one town each in Cheshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire.¹⁵⁶ Surprisingly, the archbishop of York held in only two towns – Leicester and Winchester – in addition to York.¹⁵⁷ The latter perhaps reflects his status as a member of the king's council, and the need to attend to the king's business in the capital city. The bishop of London held urban interests in only one shire beyond his home shire, while the interests of the bishops of Selsey, Rochester, Exeter and Elmham seem to have been confined to their home shires of Sussex, Kent, Devon and Norfolk, respectively.¹⁵⁸ As for Rochester, it enjoyed substantial rights over the town of Rochester itself. Domesday records that the see held eighty messuages worth £3, while diplomatic evidence suggests the community held about one third of the walled town.¹⁵⁹ The nine charters recording urban property, it is worth noting, all predate the tenth century.¹⁶⁰ Because the county of Durham was not included in Domesday Book, it is difficult to know how widespread the bishop's holdings might have been; he obviously held in Durham itself, and he possessed one house in the city of York.¹⁶¹

For the most part, the circumstances by which the sees came to hold their urban properties are elusive because the Domesday commissioners were not interested

¹⁵⁴ Twelve of the burgesses and thirty-two of the archbishop's messuages in Canterbury, for instance, paid 35s., while his seven messuages in Oxford rendered 38d. (DB, i, 3, 154).

¹⁵⁵ Sherborne: Wallingford (DB, i, 56v), Calne, Cricklade and Wilton (66r), Wareham, Dorchester, Do., Lyme Regis and Bridport (75v); Dorchester: Wallingford (56r), Oxford (154r), Dorchester (155r), Huntingdon (203r), Leicester (230v), Lincoln (336r) [the interests in Lincoln could be TRW]; Worcester: Bristol (164v), Gloucester and Winchcombe (165r), Worcester (173v) and Warwick (238v).

¹⁵⁶ Hereford: Hereford (DB, i, 181v), Worcester (182r), Oxford (154r), Winchcombe (165r); Winchester: Winchester and Houghton (40v), Wallingford (56r, 58r), Taunton (87v), Oxford (154r); Lichfield: Chester (262r), Shrewsbury (252r), Stafford (246r) and Warwick (248r).

¹⁵⁷ DB, i, 298, 230 and 42.

¹⁵⁸ London: uncertain number of burgesses in London (DB, i, 127) and fourteen burgesses with 4 acres in Colchester (ii, 11); Selsey: six closes in Chichester and three burgesses and three closes in Lewes (DB, i, 17, 16v); Exeter: at least fifty-eight houses in Exeter (101v); North Elmham: Archbishop Stigand held five burgesses and two messuages in Thetford, perhaps personally (ii, 118v) and power over fifty Norwich burgesses, again probably personally (116v).

¹⁵⁹ DB, i, 5v. Brown, "The lands and tenants," 19.

¹⁶⁰ Campbell, *Charters of Rochester*, nos. 1, 5, 7, 11, 13, 21–3 and 26.

¹⁶¹ DB, i, 298rv. For an impression of Durham's holding in the twelfth century, see *Boldon Book* (Chichester, 1982, rpt 2003).

in this information. Occasionally, however, wills and charters reveal that urban land was donated to the Church in the same manner and for the same reasons as rural property. Hence two charters record that King Alfred gave the sees of Worcester and Canterbury land on the River Thames in London.¹⁶² Laymen also gave urban property to the Church, such as the grant of the thegn Beorhtmær, made sometime between 1052 and 1070, of the church of All Hallows and its lands associated with Gracechurch in London in reversion to Christ Church, Canterbury.¹⁶³ In some cases, bishops negotiated with others to increase their urban holdings. In the last quarter of the tenth century, Æthelwold and the community at Winchester exchanged twelve hides at Moredon in Wiltshire for “land amounting to two acres within Winchester, and the stream adjacent to it within the space extending to the old town-wall, which the bishop has enclosed with a wall for the monastery.”¹⁶⁴ Rarely do we get a sense of how bishops managed their patrimonies, but this case is instructive. The land in Moredon had originally been donated to the Old Minster by the father of the man involved in the exchange, Ælfwine, so here Æthelwold was using land in far-off Wiltshire to augment his holdings in his see town. The value of urban property was often measured in terms different from rural property, and a presence in towns was as much about politics and access to urban markets as it was about income, but urban property was clearly valuable in its own right, and even these few examples demonstrate that Anglo-Saxon bishops sought to increase their holdings in towns in a variety of ways.

Given the general contraction in royal patronage of the episcopal Church over the latter part of the Anglo-Saxon period and the lackluster generosity of the kingdom’s wealthiest lay men and women, it is not surprising that entrepreneurial bishops sought to enhance the value of their endowments in other ways. While kings may have had less land to give to episcopal foundations, and perhaps less inclination to do so, various royal gifts other than land helped to compensate for diminishing grants of land. Reducing the tax burden on existing estates, ceding to bishops certain royal and comital rights relative to commerce and justice, and donating precious objects such as church plate, jewelry and manuscripts are the most obvious. The conferral of regalian rights and donations of precious objects will be examined in the next chapter, but it is worth mentioning here that such grants, like the acquisition of tax breaks, were a means of patronizing the Church without having to give up land. Beneficial hidation was perhaps the least painful way for a king to increase a see’s resources by lowering its tax burden, and the evidence indicates that Anglo-Saxon bishops embraced this form of patronage. According to Domesday Book, for example, the archbishop of York’s manor or Oddington, which included Condicote, never paid geld, while 2 of 10 hides at Hampnett were said to be quit of geld TRE.¹⁶⁵ Likewise, three of the bishop of Worcester’s 30 hides at Withington never paid geld.¹⁶⁶ Bishops of Winchester

¹⁶² S 346 and 1628.

¹⁶³ RASC, no. 116.

¹⁶⁴ RASC, no. 53.

¹⁶⁵ F 536 and 567.

¹⁶⁶ DB, i, 164v.

seem to have been particularly successful in lowering the taxes due from some of their estates. Thus Winchester's holding at Alverstoke answered for 16 hides, but King Edward had reduced it to 10.¹⁶⁷ In rare circumstances we are told why: the bishop of Winchester's 30-hide manor of Fareham, for example, only gelded for 20 hides because of the Vikings and because Fareham was beside the sea.¹⁶⁸ The most spectacular example of Winchester's beneficial hidation, though, is that of Chilcomb in Hampshire. Chilcomb was an enormous manorial complex, encompassing at least six substantial estates and many dependent villas, all for the support of the monks.¹⁶⁹ Although the complex was valued at £74 in Domesday Book, and could support eighty-four ploughs, Chilcomb was assessed at only one hide.¹⁷⁰ When it was that Winchester acquired such a significant tax break is the source of much controversy, but the Winchester tradition that Chilcomb was treated specially from the ninth century onward probably has some basis in fact.¹⁷¹ At the bishop of Sherborne's caput manor of Sherborne, too, a significant portion of ploughlands were ungelded, namely 25½ carucates; a further 2 carucates each at Beaminster, Netherbury, Charminster and Alton Pancras, 6 at Yetminster, and one at Lyme Regis also did not pay geld.¹⁷² Likewise, the minster of Beverley's estate was valued at £24 and could support seven ploughs, but the commissioners recorded that "St John's carucate was always free from the king's geld."¹⁷³ Acquiring tax concessions was clearly one way of decreasing the financial burden on episcopal estates, thus increasing resources. A detailed comparison of all of the ploughlands available on episcopal estates with the hides assessed to them would doubtless reveal more lands similarly quit of geld by the gift of English kings.

A variety of other resources, from mills and fisheries to salt-pans and renders, are too inconsistently reported in the sources to evaluate systematically, yet anecdotal evidence indicates they augmented episcopal income, perhaps significantly. The bishop of Winchester's large 51-hide manor of Old Alresford in Hampshire, for example, contained nine mills rendering over £9.¹⁷⁴ Gifts of churches also appear occasionally in Domesday Book, wills and charters, suggesting such patronage was not uncommon. A few examples related to the acquisition of churches and their lands will suffice. Besides the churches on their own estates, the archbishop of York and the bishops of Rochester, Winchester and Dorchester acquired churches on the lands of others, notably the king. As one Domesday entry records, the archbishop of York held one church and six chapels of King Edward's manor of Mottisfont in Hampshire, the see's only holding in this county, "with all customary dues from the living and the dead."¹⁷⁵ The bishop of Dorchester's three churches in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire not only gave him a foothold in the two shire towns but contributed more than 2,600 silver

¹⁶⁷ F 606.

¹⁶⁸ F 600.

¹⁶⁹ *Writs*, 373.

¹⁷⁰ DB, i, 41r.

¹⁷¹ *Writs*, 373–80.

¹⁷² DB, i, 75v–77r.

¹⁷³ DB, i, 304r.

¹⁷⁴ DB, i, 40r.

¹⁷⁵ DB, i, 42r.

Episcopal Wealth

pennies to his revenues.¹⁷⁶ It stands to reason that bishops acquired churches quite often, but because the commissioners were not particularly interested in them, these are the only unambiguous examples. Few actual grants of churches survive other than Beorhtmær of Gracechurch's bequest of All Hallow's in London to Christ Church, Canterbury, discussed above. Besides these more modest holdings, some bishops were in possession of former royal collegiate chapels. Christ Church, Canterbury's control of St Martin's, Dover and York's possession of St Oswald's minster in Gloucestershire are but two examples.

This chapter has demonstrated that pre-Conquest English bishops were undeniably wealthy, that their landed resources were, for the most part, intensely local, and that they owed the bulk of their pre-Conquest endowments to the beneficence of kings who had lived many centuries earlier. What little royal patronage there was in the next 150 years was largely the result of personal relationships forged between kings and bishops and the entrepreneurial spirit of some bishops. Such an analysis is not without its flaws, however, and it is likely that we are seeing only a small part of the picture. Patronage was, after all, a complex phenomenon in the Middle Ages, subject to a variety of spiritual and familial as well as political and financial concerns. The next chapter considers the ways in which the acquisition of rural estates and urban tenements, as well as royal and comital prerogatives, served to further tie bishops to local communities, where, in some cases, theirs was virtually the only authority in evidence.

¹⁷⁶ DB, i, 143r and 209r. Rochester held a church at Dartford (DB, i, 2v) and Winchester at Meonstoke (DB, i, 38r).

Community and Authority

MANY of the strands discussed thus far come together in this final chapter as we consider how tightly episcopal authority was woven into the fabric of local society. Lay men and women depended on bishops to confirm their children, consecrate their churches and train their clergy, to be sure. But because they were local landlords, sometimes of enviable means, and representatives of the king in secular as well as spiritual matters, bishops came to exercise considerable authority at the local level. Here, as in other matters, no prescribed set of rules dictated their non-canonical activities, and there were probably as many differences as similarities in the extent to which individuals embroiled themselves in local politics, law and commerce. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that through their professional responsibilities and personal associations bishops cultivated relationships that would bind local families and episcopal communities together in deep and lasting ways. Although they are impossible to quantify, these local relationships contributed to the Church's prosperity in a variety of ways, and therefore merit as full a discussion as the evidence will allow. This chapter explores the various ties that bound Anglo-Saxon bishops to the men and women who inhabited their dioceses, some of which would, by the end of the eleventh century, cause raised eyebrows among more than a few Gregorian reformers. Among other things, this chapter will show that the relationships created by the local activities of bishops tended to collapse the distance between clergy and laity, a distance the Gregorians would go to great lengths to reestablish.

Creating and Maintaining Spiritual Ties

While most individuals probably only saw a bishop once in their lives, the episcopal Church itself loomed large in the physical landscape of the English town and countryside, as the previous chapter demonstrated. Besides being the seat of the bishop, and a liturgical community in its own right, the cathedral church and other churches belonging to the bishop had pastoral responsibilities of their own. It is easy to forget, for instance, that the cathedral of Winchester was a spiritual community that served many of the inhabitants of the city of Winchester, and not just the bishop and his monks.¹ The unprecedented openness of liturgical observances to lay participation, monastic as well as secular, must have been in

¹ See Franklin, "The cathedral as parish church," 173–98.

recognition of the pastoral responsibilities that many monastic communities, in particular the four monastic cathedrals, undertook as well.² Because it was celebrated regularly, the liturgy of the Mass had more obvious social potential than any other liturgy, but as the previous chapters demonstrated, yearly feasts such as Candlemas, Easter and Rogationtide, as well as the odd translation of a saint, reinforced bonds already created through baptism, confirmation and regular participation in the spiritual life of a church.

The liturgical experience of belonging to the body of Christ and his saints was reinforced in a variety of non-liturgical ways. Landholders were, in a very tangible sense, responsible for the support of the local clergy, whether they wanted to be or not, through the payment of a variety of renders. It is not so easy to explain the history of ecclesiastical payments in Anglo-Saxon England because they appear in the sources as “a ragbag of miscellaneous and sometimes eccentric dues.”³ The peculiarly English render of church-scot, however, appears in the law-code of Ine (688–726) and seems to have remained the primary ecclesiastical payment for centuries.⁴ As Francesca Tinti and John Blair have both observed, church-scot, a render of grain assessed on the hide and paid by the Feast of St Martin (November 11), appears earlier and more frequently in the sources than the tithe, despite the latter’s scriptural origins.⁵ Although its payment is enjoined in the record of the legatine council of 786, the tithe, or the assessment of one-tenth of yearly income from total revenues, appears only to have become compulsory starting in the first quarter of the tenth century.⁶ The burdens on parishioners were increased in the early eleventh century with the addition of new renders such as “plough-alsms”, a penny for each plough, rendered within fifteen days of Easter; light-scot, a half penny’s worth of wax from every hide, rendered three times a year; and soul-scot, the payment for burial, which was to be rendered to the appropriate church, preferably over the open grave, even if the body was buried elsewhere.⁷ Like many of the Church’s dealings with local communities, the types of dues and renders collected at any given time must have depended heavily on local custom, law-codes notwithstanding, particularly as church-scot began to be divorced from ecclesiastical organization in the late Anglo-Saxon period.⁸ No matter how onerous they might have been, ecclesiastical dues and

² For the importance of cults in attracting pilgrims, see Tinti, “Introduction,” in *Pastoral Care*, 10 and M. Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester Part ii: The Cult of St Swithun* (Oxford, 2003).

³ Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 439.

⁴ Ine 4, 61; S 1275 and 1279. Note, however, that Ine’s law survives only in the late ninth-century legal collection associated with Alfred, so it might have been subjected to tampering (Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 103–5).

⁵ For a comprehensive discussion of dues, see F. Tinti, “The ‘costs’ of pastoral care: church dues in late Anglo-Saxon England,” 27–51 and Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 433–51.

⁶ I Æthelstan; II Edgar 3; V Æthelred 11; VIII Æthelred; I Cnut 8 §1. See Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, 153–90. It is interesting to note that the council’s decisions were reproduced in their entirety in Oda’s early tenth-century constitutions (C&S, no. 20; Tinti, “The ‘costs’ of pastoral care,” 30).

⁷ V Æthelred 11; I Cnut 12 and 13; *Wills*, nos. 3, 12, 15, 18 and 19. See Barlow, *English Church I*, 160–2 and Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 342.

⁸ Tinti, “The ‘costs’ of pastoral care,” in *Pastoral Care*, 48.

renders were not payments in the modern sense but a reflection of the reciprocity between the Church which provided pastoral care and those who received it.⁹

Still, rendering to God what was God's was probably not always easy, and it is clear from law-codes that the collection of ecclesiastical dues was a preoccupation of the Church in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Before Edgar's reign, no secular penalties were assessed for the failure to ante up, but in the later tenth century, the full force of royal authority was brought to bear on landholders who did not pay their tithes on time or at all. Edgar's *Wihthorpesstan* code (IV Edgar), which was apparently promulgated on the heels of a terrible pestilence, attributes the failure to pay tithes as one of its primary causes.¹⁰ The penalties, stated in Edgar's earlier code and restated in Cnut's, were not inconsequential: consistent failure to pay tithes resulted in the forfeiture of the produce from the remaining nine-tenths, half of which went to the diocesan bishop, while failure to pay church-scot resulted in a fine of eleven times the original amount.¹¹ Either the king's reeve and the local priest, or the lord of the manor's reeve and the bishop's reeve, were responsible for collecting the fine. Unfortunately there is no evidence to tell us how the failure to pay tithes affected the relationship between episcopal communities and local families. We can only assume that in the context of ongoing relationships ruptures happened, but that it was in everyone's best interest to heal them as quickly as possible.

The Anglo-Saxon Church could not function without the economic support of its members. But it was also part of the Church's doctrine of salvation that the rich could not get to heaven without the poor. Both of Ælfric's sermons for the first Sunday in Lent underscore the importance of paying tithes and giving alms, but he softens the blow by reminding listeners that if all men were rich, mercy would have no place.¹² In the eyes of the Church, then, dues and renders benefited donors as much as recipients. The same was true for the many other gifts local men and women gave to the Church, gifts that were made to establish spiritual ties in more substantial and lasting ways. The previous chapter considered the development and magnitude of episcopal landed wealth, but gave little consideration to the reasons why men and women, royal or otherwise, would donate lands to the Church. Although gift-giving has been well studied by Barbara Rosenwein, Stephen White and others, it is worth considering the English evidence for pious donations in the context of the relationships they created.¹³

Gifts made to God and his saints had a long pedigree; in the early Church lay men and women made offerings to God during the Mass, laying the gifts upon the altar. Over the centuries the liturgical distance between laity and clergy had grown, but the idea that the faithful should make offerings to God and the saints lived on in their gifts of land, chattel and renders. Although by the early Middle

⁹ Cf. Wulfstan homily, Napier LXI, which is all about dues, and Blickling IV.

¹⁰ IV Edgar 1. See also Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 317–20.

¹¹ II Edgar 3 §1; I Cnut 8 §2.

¹² CH, I and II: 1st Sunday in Lent.

¹³ S. D. White, *Custom, Kinship, and Gifts to Saints. The Laudatio Parentum in Western France, 1050–1150* (Chapel Hill, 1988), 25–39 and 153–76; Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of St Peter*. See also Bijsterveld, "The medieval gift," 123–56.

Ages these donations were typically celebrated extra-liturgically, the relationship they created was still often symbolized by the placement of some token on the altar.¹⁴ Because the relationship created by pious donations was thought to be between God and his saints, with the clergy merely the intercessors, the records of many gifts begin with the statement that the beneficiary was not a particular earthly community, but God and/or the patron saint of the community. The early eleventh-century will of the Ætheling Æthelstan thus bequeaths several estates to Christ and St Peter rather than the Old Minster of Winchester, and later in the century, when Ulf and Madselin went to Jerusalem, we are told that they first made an agreement with God and St Peter about the disposition of their property.¹⁵ Occasionally, donors declare that their possessions are gifts or loans from God, making their bequests to the Church a return of God's own possessions. So apparently thought Æthelric of Bocking, who, in the late tenth century, bequeathed "the possessions which God has lent to him."¹⁶ More often, though, the gift was made in the expectation that it would result in God's favor. Such was the hope expressed by Cnut's charter purportedly granting the port of Sandwich to the monks of Christ Church: "may we purchase the eternal reward of the heavenly life with these crumbling riches."¹⁷ Gifts thus established links not simply between the family and the religious community, but between the family, the community, God and the patron saint. In Megan McLaughlin's words, "the act of donation . . . served to identify the donor as an 'offerer,' as a servant of God and the saints, and hence as a member of the ritual community gathered around the altar."¹⁸ The opportunity thus remained for parishioners and friends to establish and maintain spiritual ties with the Church through extra-liturgical giving, the legitimacy of which would not be called into question until well into the eleventh century.

While the theological and historical roots of generosity were to be found in the early Church, the idea of the gift-exchange was thoroughly medieval. Generosity had great social value in a world in which status was enhanced by conspicuous demonstrations of wealth and liberality. Rosenwein, White and Bouchard have all underscored the significance of the social and familial aspects of gift-giving, often at the expense of the economic and even spiritual dimensions.¹⁹ In an age when most families lacked the means to keep the memory of their own dead alive, they turned to the Church, which enrolled local men and women into spiritual confraternity, thereby keeping the names of the dead alive to the living through the liturgy.²⁰ For families whose power and prestige was based on the deeds of their illustrious ancestors, this was a vital means of projecting that power and prestige into the future. A permanent fixture in a world of impermanence, the

¹⁴ M. McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints. Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, 1994), 141–2.

¹⁵ *Wills*, no. 20 and F 1065.

¹⁶ *Wills*, no. 16(1).

¹⁷ *RASC*, no. 82.

¹⁸ McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, 142.

¹⁹ See the summary discussion in McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, 134–6.

²⁰ P. Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1994), 87.

Church was suspended between the earthly and spiritual domains, uniquely capable of creating a bridge between the living and the dead.²¹ In Annette Weiner's words, "an individual's role in social life is fragmentary unless attached to something permanent."²² In the rough and tumble world of the Viking age, only the Church represented this kind of permanency.

Generosity was clearly a class marker, but even a cursory reading of the evidence for pious giving reveals a strong belief in the power of intercessory prayer. Though never conceived of as an even exchange, gifts of material wealth triggered counter-gifts of prayer for the donor and his or her family. Hence the aforementioned Ætheling Æthelstan's generosity to Old Minster, Winchester was for "the soul of my dear father, King Æthelred and for mine, and for the soul of Ælfthryth, my grandmother, who brought me up."²³ Likewise, one Ælfgifu donated an estate to the same community in the hope that Bishop Æthelwold, would "always intercede for my mother and me."²⁴ The theology of prayer for the dead was not firmly established by the tenth and eleventh centuries, but the sources reflect the belief that the living, in particular the clergy, could intercede on behalf of the dead. The journey from this life to the next was thought to be made easier for both the good and the damned by the thoughts and prayers of those left behind. Although orthodoxy held that only the merits of the individual could determine his or her eternal fate, McLaughlin has shown that the clergy, as well as the laity, subscribed at least in part to the idea of "provisional damnation," in which basically good souls, particularly those with penance left undone, could escape the torments of hell by the intercession of others.²⁵ A mid eleventh-century manuscript associated with the see of Worcester and containing *ordines* and prayers concerning confession for the sick and the dead includes, *inter alia*, a way to help a dead friend. It reads "his friend who remains in this life may release him and earn him forgiveness from God with divine service and with worldly possessions."²⁶ The prayers solicited in the wills and charters for the souls of the donors' dead family members also reflect the belief that the living could indeed help the dead. So when the tenth-century Ealdorman Ælfheah left the bulk of his estate to his wife, Ælfswith, he did so with the expectation that she would "be zealous for the welfare of our souls."²⁷ A century later, Leofgifu's will begins with the statement that her gifts to God and St Edmund were for the redemption of her soul and her lord's.²⁸ In some cases, the lands donated on behalf of specific individuals were originally given to the donors by those individuals. These lands were being held in trust by later donors to be used at the appropriate time on behalf of the original donors.

²¹ The concept of "inalienable possessions" held in trust by churches for families, or the paradox of "keeping-while-giving," is explored by A. B. Weiner in *Inalienable Possessions. The Paradox of Keeping-While-Giving* (Berkeley, 1992).

²² Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions*, 64.

²³ *Wills*, no. 20.

²⁴ *Wills*, no. 8. See also S 1511, 1495, 1530, 1535 and 1519.

²⁵ McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, 206.

²⁶ London, BL, Laud 482, fos. 19–20, in Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 75, 87.

²⁷ *Wills*, no. 9.

²⁸ *Wills*, no. 29.

Although wills and charters rarely speak of intercession in explicit terms, it is clear that donors expected beneficiaries to pray for them and for their families. In only a handful of instances, however, is the exact nature of the intercession specified, perhaps because such specifications were less fashionable in late Anglo-Saxon England. The ninth-century wills of Oswulf and his wife provide some sense of what wealthy donors could expect in exchange for their donations. In return for estates and food rents, they asked to be remembered each year on the anniversaries of their deaths by the celebration of Masses, the reading of “passions” and the singing of fifty psalms for each of them.²⁹ The community was further asked to distribute alms in their behalf. Another couple, Earl Æthelred and his wife, Æthelflæd, who ruled Mercia in the late ninth century on behalf of King Alfred, gave the bishopric of Worcester valuable economic rights in the city so that both before and after their deaths the canons would sing specific psalms during three daily Offices and another thirty psalms and a Mass every Saturday.³⁰ This was extravagant liturgical commemoration by any standard, and it not only reflects the value of the rights they gave they see but the reciprocal friendship the family and the community enjoyed.³¹ Only a handful of eleventh-century sources specify the prayers the donors hoped to receive: Bury St Edmunds, for example, was asked to say one Mass every day for the souls of Ketel and Edwin, while Thorney apparently owed Mantat the Anchorite 200 Masses and 200 psalters each year, in addition to other prayers, in return for his gift of several estates.³²

It was more common in later wills, however, for the nature of the spiritual intercession to be left up to the clergy. Thus Ceolwin’s gift c. 900 of 15 hides at Alton Priors to the Old Minster Winchester for the refectory of the episcopal see was made on the condition that “they remember her and Oswald’s soul, as seems right and fitting to them, on his commemoration day which is seven days before the Rogation Days.”³³ It may be that in England by the tenth century, as on the Continent, the prayers themselves had become secondary to the spiritual relationship the transaction established.³⁴ As Stephen White has shown, relationships between families and communities often entailed a complex series of exchanges; because of the nature of the sources, however, we are usually only privy to one side. The preeminence of the relationship is highlighted by the time it often took for gifts to actually reach their intended beneficiaries. In only the most unusual of circumstances would a donor *not* have to worry about his or her family when it came time to dispose of property. As Timothy Reuter once remarked, “it would have taken the four horsemen of the Apocalypse to render Saxon land-holders so heirless as to be able to dispose of their land without having to take anyone else into account.”³⁵ Anglo-Saxon landholders were no less prolific, so the transfer of

²⁹ Harmer, *SEHD*, no. 1. Fleming, “History and liturgy,” 71.

³⁰ Harmer, *SEHD*, no. 13.

³¹ See Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 19.

³² *Wills*, nos. 33 and 23, respectively. Will no. 23 is suspicious as it stands.

³³ *RASC*, no. 17.

³⁴ McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, 153.

³⁵ T. Reuter, “Property transactions and social relations between rulers, bishops and nobles in early eleventh-century Saxony: the evidence of the *Vita Meinwerki*,” in Davies, *Property and Power*, 183.

possession could take several lifetimes to accomplish. The mid eleventh-century Essex widow Wulfgyth, for example, bequeathed to Christ Church, Canterbury the estate at Stisted, plus additional wood and open lands, “for the sustenance of the monks in the community.” But the bequest was to go into effect only after the deaths of her two sons, Ælfketil and Ketel. From Ketel’s will, which is also extant, we can see that he did intend to fulfill her wishes, but the spiritual beneficiaries were his father and Sæflæd, presumably his widow.³⁶ Because the estate appears in Canterbury’s pre-Conquest holdings in Domesday Essex, it eventually passed to the see, likely “without controversy,” as Wulfgyth had desired.

Like Wulfgyth’s, many of the extant aristocratic wills bequeath land in reversion to the Church, which is to say that immediate family members were given use of the land before the land reverted to the Church. In some cases, donors sealed the bargain with smaller gifts to symbolize the bond established in the transaction. Thurstan’s bequest of Wimbish to Canterbury, which was to take effect only after his and his wife’s death, was commemorated by his yearly donation of £1 to Christchurch, until such time as Wimbish reverted to the community.³⁷ Æthelweard’s mid tenth-century bequest of Ickham to Eadric, in reversion to Christ Church, Canterbury, is unusually explicit: Eadric was to pay, at Michaelmas, “the rent stated, namely £5 and one day’s food-rent to the community every year, to consist of forty sesters of ale, sixty loaves, a wether sheep, a flitch of bacon and an ox’s haunch, two cheeses, four hens and five pence.”³⁸ Not only did interim payments provide communities with income until such time as bequests took effect, but they reaffirmed on a yearly basis the friendship that existed between the two original parties, making it more difficult for unenthusiastic family members to water down bequests over time.

Because land was the basis of early medieval wealth and power, productive estates were valuable gifts, but wealthy lay men and women supported the Church in other ways. Some preferred, for instance, to provide explicitly for the daily needs of the monks and canons in the form of renders. Descriptions of renders are rare, but such support must have been fairly common. St Paul’s, London, for instance, received a yearly food rent in the mid tenth century from one Ælfwold, who was allowed to inherit an estate in the will of Ælfgar as long as he supported the episcopal canons from its proceeds.³⁹ In other cases, donors specified the purpose for which the land was to be used. Thus King Athelstan had given the Old Minster at Winchester several estates explicitly to provide for the food and clothing of the monks, while Æthelric’s gift of Rayne to St Paul’s in the late tenth century was intended to provide for lighting.⁴⁰ From these types of gifts it is a small jump to simply donating the goods themselves. Necrologies and house histories such as the *Liber Eliensis* show that the laity also gave the Church a

Stephen White refers to the various interested family members as “the absent, the unborn and the infantile” (White, *Custom, Kinship and Gifts to Saints*, 172).

³⁶ *Wills*, nos. 32 and 34.

³⁷ *Wills*, no. 30.

³⁸ *RASC*, no. 32. Cf. *Wills*, no. 8.

³⁹ *Wills*, no. 2.

⁴⁰ *Wills*, no. 16(1).

variety of objects including jewelry, church-plate, vestments, and illuminated manuscripts, many of which would have been far more valuable than small estates.⁴¹ Evidence for gifts of material objects does not survive in the same manner or quantity as evidence for donations of land, but what there is indicates that gold and silver objects and lavishly adorned manuscripts were used in much the same fashion as land – both to bestow on the community something of economic value and to link donors symbolically with the community in perpetuity. Like land, treasure symbolized the donor's power and status, and its dispersal was therefore more controlled than sources indicate.⁴² As Pauline Stafford puts it, "treasure, in all its forms, was the currency of hegemonial politics, as mobile, shifting and personal as hegemony itself."⁴³ Moreover, precious objects could stand indefinitely in church spaces as tangible, potent reminders of these material and spiritual links in ways that small pieces of sod or tittle-deeds laid upon the altar by the donor could not.⁴⁴ The evidence suggests that gifts of chattel were more common in the later Anglo-Saxon period, perhaps replacing renders, which feature more predominantly in early wills and charters, as substitutes for gifts of land.⁴⁵ This may, however, be a function of more evidence from the tenth and eleventh centuries. In any case, as was discussed in chapter 2, the donation of valuable objects was a significant marker of high-status piety by the tenth century, part of the constellation of religious activities in which kings, earls and thegns participated.⁴⁶

Few gifts could have been more symbolic of a king's relationship with an episcopal community than Cnut's gift of his crown to Christ Church,⁴⁷ but a variety of gifts, especially when placed on the altar or used in the liturgy, created tangible links between patrons and communities. King Athelstan's generosity to the community of St Cuthbert was legendary: crosses, church-plate, vestments, tapestries and other textiles, jewelry, standards and other items of secular use, most of which were made of gold, silver or ivory.⁴⁸ To Exeter the king purportedly gave one-third of his collection of relics.⁴⁹ Athelstan's successor, Edmund, was also a patron of Durham, to which he gave two gold bracelets and two palls.⁵⁰

⁴¹ A text preserved in Hemming's Cartulary records that the see of Worcester paid the following exorbitant taxes on church-plate to William I: "... for the vessel which is called by another name the 'incense bowl' ten pounds, and for the fifteen crosses six marks, and for the other vessel and for the cup and for the jar and for the bowl eleven marks, and for the long chest eight pounds, and for the three horns three marks, and for the candlestick ten pounds, and for the crosier thirty-three marks ..." (RASC, App. 1, no. 6).

⁴² See Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions*, which, although not focused on medieval Europe, discusses how distributed treasure emphasized the amount of treasure the donor still had, and therefore reinforced his or her status in society.

⁴³ P. Stafford, "Queens and treasure in the early Middle Ages," in *Treasure in the Medieval West*, ed. E. Tyler (York, 2000), 80.

⁴⁴ For an example of a donor laying tittle-deeds on the altar, see Harmer, *SEHD*, no. 23.

⁴⁵ See A. Wareham, "The transformation of kinship and the family in late Anglo-Saxon England, *EME* 10 (2001), 375–99.

⁴⁶ See above, 49.

⁴⁷ G, 2 Ides November (Fleming, "Christchurch's brothers and sisters," 129–30).

⁴⁸ *HSC*, §26.

⁴⁹ Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter*, Appendix II; Keynes, "King Athelstan's books," 143–6.

⁵⁰ *LDE*, ii, §18.

The large gold cross and gold altar, not to mention £4,000, that King Eadred gave to Winchester must have come in handy, though what the clerks did with the two gilt swords he gave them is less obvious.⁵¹

It is not surprising that two other kings of late-Saxon England – Edgar and Cnut – are recorded as generous patrons. King Edgar, patron of reformed monasticism, commissioned a magnificent bejeweled reliquary for the translation of St Swithun at the Old Minster Winchester, which not only served as a fitting home for remains of a saint in which Bishop Æthelwold took a special interest, but a constant reminder of Edgar's support of the reform effort.⁵² As a conqueror, Cnut needed the support of the Church, and he proved to be a very generous patron. To Winchester Cathedral, where he would be buried, the king gave gifts whose value even William of Malmesbury praised: "the quantity of metals terrifies the minds of strangers and the splendor of the gems lashes the eyes of the onlookers."⁵³

Evidence indicates that late Anglo-Saxon queens were also generous patrons of English cathedral communities. Edward the Elder's queen, Ælflæd, commissioned a stole and maniple, which would eventually be given to the community of St Cuthbert, for Frithestan, bishop of Winchester; legends on the maniple state that "ÆLLFLÆD FIERI PRECEPIT and PIO FRIDESTANO EPISCOPO."⁵⁴ Ælfgifu Emma, wife first of King Æthelred and then of his successor, Cnut, was commemorated at Christ Church for her gift of the arm of St Bartholomew, the trunk of St Ouen, as well as two dorsals and capes with gold tassels.⁵⁵ Emma also gave the community at Old Minster, Winchester, to which she was probably closer, various golden objects in addition to estates.⁵⁶ Cnut and Emma's interest in the welfare of English ecclesiastical communities is further implied by a story in the *vita* of Wulfsig of Sherborne. According to Goscelin, Wulfsig's hagiographer, Emma and Cnut were so dismayed when they visited Sherborne that the roof over the saint's shrine was in such disrepair that she donated £20 to fix it and promised even more.⁵⁷

Finally, among the most valuable gifts – materially and symbolically – donated to the Church by the laity were illuminated manuscripts. The presentation portrait in a copy of the *Life of St Cuthbert* given to the community of Chester-le-Street by King Athelstan famously celebrates the relationship between donor and recipient, but evidence tying particular books to donors is quite rare.⁵⁸

⁵¹ *VSÆ*, §10. M. Lapidge, "Artistic and literary patronage in Anglo-Saxon England," *Settimani* 39 (1992), 151–2. Eadred also gave the kingdom's bishoprics 1,600 pounds and 2,000 mancuses for defense against the Vikings. The Ætheling Æthelstan bequeathed to the Old Minster a sword with a silver hilt and a gold belt and armlet, as well as the same drinking horn he had originally bought from Winchester. These gifts probably reflected the friendship between the Ætheling and Æthelsige, bishop of Winchester, to whom he bequeathed a gold crucifix and a stallion (*Wills*, no. 20).

⁵² *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno*, 63–177, in Lapidge, "Artistic and literary patronage," 152.

⁵³ *Annales Monastici*, II, 6; *GR*, §170, in T. A. Heslop, "The production of *de luxe* manuscripts and the patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma," *ASE* 19 (1990), 157.

⁵⁴ *The Relics of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. C. F. Battiscombe (Oxford, 1956), 375 and pl. XXXIII.

⁵⁵ *G*, 2 Ides November (Fleming, "Christchurch's brothers and sisters," 129–30); *HN*, 107–10; Gameson, *Role of Art*, 250.

⁵⁶ *Annales Monastici*, II, 18.

⁵⁷ Love, "The life of St Wulfsig of Sherborne by Goscelin," §XIV.

⁵⁸ Gameson, *Role of Art*, 58–9.

Athelstan appears to have been particularly interested in donating books: extant booklists and inscriptions indicate that he also gave St Cuthbert's community several Gospel books and a sacramentary, two Gospel-books to Christ Church, and perhaps a psalter to the Old Minster, Winchester.⁵⁹ Cnut and Emma were unusually interested in the production of lavish manuscripts for distribution as gifts. Heslop has suggested that the royal couple commissioned perhaps as many as fifteen of the finest illuminated manuscripts produced in the eleventh century, a handful of which were destined for episcopal communities like Canterbury, Winchester and York.⁶⁰ Because inscriptions and other notices of donations are rare, we will never know if Athelstan and Cnut had a particular proclivity for giving manuscripts or if such donations were, in fact, an element of royal piety in the tenth and eleventh centuries. One suspects that more of the extant deluxe manuscripts had royal connections at some point in their histories.

Kings like Athelstan and Cnut, as well as queens, tended to give or bequeath a wide range of items, including jewelry, church-plate, vestments and books to communities, thus meeting a variety of their needs at once. The Anglo-Saxon princess St Margaret of Scotland's bequest to Durham, although post-Conquest, is probably representative: it included her favorite Gospel-book, written in letters of silver, a fine linen robe, and the cross, decorated with pearls, that she was holding in her hand when she died.⁶¹ It goes without saying that these were valuable gifts, both for their intrinsic worth and for the spiritual bonds they created. Not only were most of these objects useful, but they could also be turned into currency fairly easily when the see was in need of ready cash. The story that Bishop Æthelwold had some of Winchester's metal objects hacked up to feed the poor during a famine demonstrates the importance of keeping a supply of precious objects on hand.⁶² The precise value of most objects is unknowable, but a few anecdotal references provide some sense of what a bishop could expect to glean from his cache of treasure. In terms of manuscripts, an early text, Bede's *Historia Abbatum*, records that Aldrith, king of Northumbria in the late seventh and early eighth centuries, sold 8 hides of land in return for a manuscript containing cosmographical writings that Benedict Biscop had acquired in Rome.⁶³ Several centuries later, Ælfric Bata's *Colloquy* depicts a scribe and a potential customer haggling over the price of a missal: the scribe wants to charge 2 pounds of pure silver, but has to settle for 1½ pounds, or 12 mancuses.⁶⁴ Although objects like the six-armed candelabrum that Cnut donated cannot be

⁵⁹ "Booklists," no. II; G 354, 521, 362 and 334 (Keynes, "King Athelstan's books," 147–59, 170–85; Brooks, *Early History*, 218–20).

⁶⁰ G 774, 306, 447, 887 and 290, respectively (Heslop, "The production of *de luxe* manuscripts," 181–2).

⁶¹ G 651; *The Gospel Book of Saint Margaret being a Facsimile Reproduction of St Margaret's Copy of the Gospels preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, ed. W. Forbes-Leith (Edinburgh, 1896).

⁶² Æthelwold "could not tolerate dumb metal being preserved untouched while man, created in the image of God and redeemed by the precious book of Christ, perished in poverty and lack of sustenance" (VSÆ, §29). Cf. Hemming, i, 248–9.

⁶³ Bede, *Historia Abbatum*, in *Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*, ed. C. Plummer, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1896), i, 379–80.

⁶⁴ *Early Scholastic Colloquies*, ed. W. H. Stevenson (Oxford, 1929), 50–1, in Lapidge, "Artistic and literary patronage," 144.

valued, it is instructive that the cross he and Emma gave to New Minster, destroyed in 1141, was said to have yielded to the bishop 50 pounds of silver and 30 marks of gold.⁶⁵ The value of vestments is particularly hard to gauge, but a pre-Conquest notice that Queen Edith sent a small, Anglo-Saxon-made vestment to Abbot Gervin of Saint-Riquier and received two churches in exchange is suggestive.⁶⁶ Likewise, when a post-Conquest cope and two chasubles were burned in the fourteenth century to retrieve their gold, they netted Canterbury more than £250, an impressive figure.⁶⁷ Whatever the actual worth of all of these gifts, royal patronage of this nature supports a change in benefaction. Royal gifts of land were made less often, as was clear in the previous chapter, but if the evidence is to be trusted, gifts of treasure were increasingly common. Given hints at their worth, one imagines beneficiaries were often more than pleased with this turn of events.

Not surprisingly, wealthy non-royal men and women also enriched the kingdom's religious communities, episcopal sees included, with valuable objects. Although still meager and skewed toward a handful of sees, the evidence does provide an impression of the scope of comital giving. Like their royal counterparts, England's wealthiest aristocrats gifted splendid statues, manuscripts, crucifixes, vestments and the like. Earl Tostig and his wife Judith, for example, commissioned a magnificent figure of Christ on the Cross, clothed in gold and silver, for the community at Durham.⁶⁸ Countesses Goda and Godgifu likewise gave gold and silver chasubles, shrines and crucifixes to Rochester and St Paul's, London, respectively.⁶⁹ The most remarkable manuscript given by a lay man or woman in the Anglo-Saxon period was the magnificent *Stockholm Codex Aureus*, which Ealdorman Ælfred and his wife Werburgh ransomed from the Vikings to give to Christ Church in the late ninth century.⁷⁰ Gifts of cash occasionally appear in the sources, such as the 100 mancuses of gold and 10 pounds of pence that Ealdorman Æthelmær bequeathed to the Old Minster, Winchester in the late tenth century.⁷¹ Aristocratic gifts of chattel were doubtless much more common than the sources indicate. Even Earl Godwine, who was most often remembered in sources as a predator rather than a patron, was said to have made many generous gifts of ornaments for the redemption of his soul.⁷²

Below the ealdormen and earls were the thegns of various ranks. For obvious reasons, the wealthiest of the thegnly families sought to rival the ealdormen and earls in their generosity to ecclesiastical foundations, including episcopal sees. Brihtric and Ælfswith, for instance, patronized both Rochester and Canterbury in

⁶⁵ JW, s.a. 1141.

⁶⁶ C. R. Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Art: A New Perspective* (Manchester, 1982), 182 and 300 note 83.

⁶⁷ As Dodwell notes, it only cost Boxley Abbey £120 to build their cloisters (*Anglo-Saxon Art*, 181).

⁶⁸ *LDE*, iii, §11. The couple apparently also gave Durham images of Mary and St John.

⁶⁹ *Registrum Roffense*, ed. J. Thorpe (1769), 119; *Descriptio . . . thesaurariae ecclesiae S. Pauli London*, ed. W. Sparrow Simpson in *Archaeologia*, L (London, 1887), 482-; L-B, 2743 (Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 23, 180).

⁷⁰ G 937.

⁷¹ *Wills*, no. 10. Æthelmær also made small cash bequests to both Canterbury and Rochester.

⁷² *VÆR*, 30.

the late tenth century. While both foundations were doubtless grateful for their generosity, their gift of four estates accounted for about 15 percent of Rochester's patrimony on the eve of the Conquest.⁷³ The alliances they cultivated with the communities were further cemented with gifts of cash and jewelry: to Rochester they bequeathed 30 mancuses of gold and a necklace of 40 mancuses, a silver cup and half a gold headband, and to Canterbury 60 mancuses of gold, a necklace worth 80 mancuses and two silver cups. Another wealthy thegn, Thoræd, gave Christ Church Gospel-books adorned with gold and silver; his gift of an estate at East Horsely was inscribed in one of them.⁷⁴ Osbern Bigge, who had granted 72 messuages in Canterbury to Christ Church, also gave the community two chasubles, three cloaks studded with silver and jewels, a large censer, and a magnificent silk dorsal.⁷⁵ Finally, Wulfgyth, whose will bequeathing Stisted to Canterbury after the deaths of her sons was discussed above, also included the bequest of a little gold crucifix, perhaps a tangible reminder of the gift.⁷⁶

If, as seems likely, these scattered references reveal only the tip of the iceberg of pious giving on the part of wealthy lay men and women, Anglo-Saxon churches must have been crammed full of statues, crosses, chalices, vestments, Gospel-books and other valuable objects – objects that, like gifts of land, created tangible and lasting bonds between local families and cathedral communities, their patron saints and, ultimately, God. Because many of these relationships were liturgically commemorated on a yearly basis, often in the presence of the donors' families, new generations were constantly being incorporated into the nexus of the communities' prayers. Bonds were even further cemented in some cases by the burial of the donor within the confines of the community. The ninth-century King Æthelberht's gift of immunities to Sherborne, "where the body of his brother, King Æthelbald, lies" was made for his soul and the souls of his family, but a later grant of King Edgar records that Æthelberht was also buried there.⁷⁷ The generosity of Kings Eadred and Cnut to the Old Minster, described above, was surely predicated on their plans to be buried in this church with ancient ties to the West Saxon monarchy.⁷⁸ Aristocratic men and women also patronized churches where they planned to be buried. Ordnoth and his wife gave Old Minster 10 hides at Candover in the mid tenth century "that on the day of our death they will fetch us with the minster's resources and provide for us such resting-place as is necessary for us in God's sight and fitting in the eyes of the world."⁷⁹ Another tenth-century Winchester patron, Wulfgar, bequeathed the estate of Ham to his wife in reversion to Winchester, "where my body rests."⁸⁰

⁷³ *Wills*, no. 11.

⁷⁴ G, A, 15 Kalends August (Fleming, "Christchurch's brothers and sisters," 128).

⁷⁵ Fleming, "Rural elites," 12 n. 41.

⁷⁶ *Wills*, no. 32.

⁷⁷ *RASC*, no. 11 and 50. Both of these grants are problematic as they stand, but may be based on authentic grants (S 333 and 813 for comments).

⁷⁸ Harmer, *SEHD*, no. 21. For Cnut, *ASC*, s.a. 1035 (CDE). Cnut's son, Harthcnut and his nephew, Earl Beorn, were also buried there (*ASC*, s.a. 1041 [E] and 1049 [CDE], respectively).

⁷⁹ *Wills*, no. 5.

⁸⁰ *RASC*, no. 26. Cf. *Wills*, no. 8; *RASC*, no. 53; and F 617.

One's eternal resting place was a matter of supreme importance, and reflected a deep bond with a particular community, a bond that obviously transcended the earthly. Although we do not know where most Anglo-Saxons were buried, it may be that patrons who were particularly generous to one community had some expectation of spending eternity in the vicinity of its living members and in the company of its honored dead.⁸¹

The pious gifts of lay men and women, whether kings, queens, aristocrats or thegns, forged links between episcopal communities and donors that were commemorated in a variety of ways, from the provision of daily prayers and yearly memorial Masses to the display of life-sized statues, manuscripts, crosses and embroideries. When they describe the spiritual benefits the donors hoped to receive in return for their support of the Church, the sources bear witness to the laity's profound belief in the intercessory power of the Church. The words in the wills and charters were not just clerical boilerplate, but a manifestation of the religious beliefs and social aspirations of the kingdom's landholders. Men and women who were in a position to do so patronized the Church because it was part of the assemblage of pious activities of members of their class. As the previous chapter demonstrated, the very wealthiest tended to distribute their donations more widely, while men and women of more modest means confined their pious giving to local religious communities. Other factors besides geography influenced their choices, however, such as the relative prestige of certain foundations, previous family connections, and personal relationships with members of communities. It may be that monastic communities were considered more efficacious centers of prayer (although chapter 3 suggested this was not always the case) and better repositories of social status and family memory than secular communities, which might account for the difficulties most cathedral communities, in particular the secular ones, experienced in attracting steady lay patronage. Although monastic houses did undertake pastoral care in the Anglo-Saxon world, they were nevertheless prayer factories by definition. The laity tapped into the prayer nexus through gifts *pro anima*, but also through oblation, in which a family member was given to the monastery as a child to permanently represent the family's spiritual interests vis-à-vis that community (and God).⁸² To be sure, dynamic secular communities could and did perform the same services for the laity, but most lacked famous saints' cults or impressive collections of relics. It may also be that English monks and nuns, like their Continental brothers and sisters, thought of themselves as earthly counterparts to the community of saints in heaven.⁸³ In allying themselves with these particularly holy communities the laity thus entered into confraternity with important saints. It must have been

⁸¹ In only a few other cases is place of burial known: Earl Godwine at Winchester (ASC, s.a. 1053 [A] and *VÆR*, 30); King Æthelred and the Ætheling Edward at London (JW, s.a. 1016 and ASC, s.a. 1057 [CD], respectively); and Earl Uhtred's first wife and King Guthred at Durham (*De Obsessione Dunelmi et de Probitate Uchtredi Comititis*, in Symeon, 2 and *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1962), 51, respectively).

⁸² See also I. Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order. A Comparative Sociological Study of Monasticism in Theravada Buddhism and Medieval Christianity* (Cambridge, 1995).

⁸³ For the association between the monastic life and the *vita angelica*, see Deshman, *Benedictional*, 170–6.

difficult indeed for smallish secular communities to compete with cult centers and powerhouses of prayer like Glastonbury, Ely and Abingdon.

In any case, the evidence discussed above provides some sense of the spiritual, social and economic ties established between religious houses and the laity by gifts of land and treasure. While the evidence in Domesday Book suggests that many gifts of land have been accounted for, the same cannot be said for gifts of treasure, which the extant sources doubtless dramatically understate. Donations of land may have fallen off over the centuries, but episcopal communities continued to draw patronage in the form of gold and silver objects not just because they were attractive spiritual communities, as some clearly were, but because their leaders exercised secular as well as spiritual power in the dioceses. We turn now to the legal activities of Anglo-Saxon bishops, on behalf of both kings and their own communities, activities that only deepened their involvement in local society.

Authority, Conflict and Compromise

While the wills, charters and obituary lists recording lay grants to episcopal communities reflect deeply-held beliefs, the patronage of an episcopal community also brought the donor into the *familia* of a powerful man whose legal authority in the diocese was virtually unrivalled. Prestigious monasteries like Glastonbury and Abingdon exerted a powerful influence on the surrounding landscape, and their abbots were clearly men of kingdom-wide importance, yet they did not possess the legal authority of diocesan bishops, which many donors must have found attractive. Since the days of King Edgar, and probably before, diocesan bishops were required to preside with earls over shire and borough courts.⁸⁴ Like many of the royal duties of bishops, the administration of justice was, at least by Archbishop Wulfstan's day (and in Wulfstan's words) a pastoral duty of considerable importance in the fashioning of a godly society, which could only be accomplished where peace and justice reigned.⁸⁵ Exactly how these courts functioned is unclear, but scattered evidence shows that Anglo-Saxon bishops often played the significant roles the laws conferred upon them. Royal writs, for example, which emerged in the reign of Cnut, are frequently addressed to diocesan bishops in their roles as shire court presidents. Writs were instruments publicizing aspects of royal administration, such as changes in the *terra regis*, royal grants of rights and dues, ecclesiastical appointments and the like, to the great men of a county via the shire court.⁸⁶ Because they were meant to work through the shire courts, they were generally addressed to the men whose business it was to make their contents known – local magnates like bishops, abbots, earls and thegns. Thus Cnut's writ confirming Christ Church's liberties is addressed to the archbishop, the bishop of Rochester, the abbot of St Augustine's and the sheriff of

⁸⁴ III Edgar 5 §2 and II Cnut 18 §1.

⁸⁵ See above, 40.

⁸⁶ *Writs*, introduction and Fleming, *Domesday Book and the Law*, 29–30.

Kent, while an early writ of Edward the Confessor in favor of Bury St Edmunds is addressed to Bishop Stigand, Earl Harold and the thegns of East Anglia.⁸⁷

Charters and other records are occasionally more forthcoming in their descriptions of shire court proceedings, allowing us fleeting glimpses into the legal culture of late Anglo-Saxon England. Early in the Confessor's reign, for example, the purchase of an estate in Kent was transacted between kinfolk at Wye, before the whole shire of Kent.⁸⁸ The transaction was witnessed by Eadsige, archbishop of Canterbury, Siward, "bishop" of St Martin's, members of their respective communities, a handful of Kentish thegns and "many good men in addition." To vouchsafe the transaction, copies were to be kept both at Christ Church and St Augustine's. The account of a lawsuit brought before the Herefordshire court during the reign of Cnut gives some sense of the bishop's role as president of the court. In this case, one Edwin sued his own mother at a shire meeting in Aylton, at which Bishop Æthelstan, Earl Ranig, Thurkil the White, Tofi the Proud, and all the thegns of Herefordshire were reportedly present. Bishop Æthelstan appears to have been presiding over the meeting, because it was he who asked whose business it was to answer for Edwin's mother and then dispatched thegns to inquire of the mother her position in this dispute. That the diocesan cathedral functioned as a sort of town hall, at least in some lay men's eyes, is reflected in the fact that once the suit was settled, Thurkil apparently rode to the cathedral church of St Æthelbert's minster and had the settlement recorded in a Gospel-book there.⁸⁹

The record of a late tenth-century lawsuit further illustrates of the diocesan's role in shire court proceedings.⁹⁰ In a dispute between Wynflæd and Leofwine, Wynflæd produced before King Æthelred some very influential witnesses, namely Archbishop Sigeric, Bishop Ordbrigt of Selsey, Earl Ælfric and Ælfthryth, the king's mother, all of whom testified that Ælfric gave Wynflæd the estates at Hagbourne and Bradfield in return for the estate at Datchet. Unsatisfied (and undaunted), Leofwine demanded a hearing before the Berkshire shire court, including Bishops Æthelsige of Sherborne and Æscwig of Dorchester. Against such powerful allies of Wynflæd, who sent statements of support, Leofwine did not prevail, and was forced to hand over the estate in question to Bishop Æthelsige. Æthelsige was probably acting as the court's president during a time when the see of Ramsbury, in whose jurisdiction Berkshire more appropriately lay, was vacant.⁹¹ Several years later, Leofwine was back in court, this time litigating against the bishop of Rochester. In his capacity as Kentish court president, Archbishop Ælfric probably held the shire court that settled the dispute.⁹² It is worth noting that bishops probably often benefited from the misdeeds of the men and women who lived in their dioceses. A late tenth-century Worcester memorandum records that one estate, Helperby, had come into the see's possession because of an illicit union where "there were two brothers who had one wife."⁹³

If the workings of the shire court are poorly attested, those of the borough court

⁸⁷ *Writs*, nos. 26 and 13, respectively.

⁸⁸ *RASC*, no. 103.

⁸⁹ *RASC*, no. 78; F 16.

⁹⁰ *RASC*, no. 66.

⁹¹ *RASC*, 380–2.

⁹² *RASC*, no. 69.

⁹³ *RASC*, no. 54.

are virtually opaque. Law-codes mandate the meeting of borough courts three times a year, and bishops played a similarly prominent role in these courts.⁹⁴ It is certainly noteworthy that the borough court of London met three times a year in the bishop's churchyard.⁹⁵ Only four extant writs appear to have been addressed to borough courts: two to London, one to Thetford and one to Winchester; the Thetford writ is not, however, addressed to the local bishop. The two London writs announce grants of sake and soke over lands in the city, first to the London *cnihtengild* and second to the abbot of Chertsey, and they are addressed to Bishop Ælfweard and Bishop William, respectively, as well as the port-reeve and citizens of the city.⁹⁶ The other borough writ addressed to a bishop announces King Edward's mother's grant of a messuage in Winchester to the Old Minster. It is addressed to the bishop of Winchester, Earl Godwine, and *ealle þa burhmen on Wincestre*.⁹⁷ The absence of the bishop in the Thetford writ may mean that bishops were most active in the courts of the boroughs in which their sees were located. There is evidence that they were required, at the very least, to provide judges. The Domesday description of Chester stipulates that in the city of Chester there were twelve judges, and that these were the men of the king, the bishop and the earl. If any failed to show up, they paid a fine to the king and the earl.⁹⁸

Meetings of shire, hundred and borough courts were, in Robin Fleming's words, "moments when royal power manifests itself in the localities, since the neighborhood judgments made there were produced under the aegis of king's men – his ealdormen, bishops, sheriffs and hundred reeves."⁹⁹ But Fleming also points out that the king's role in local assemblies was restricted to matters that concerned him directly – his holdings or his officials. For everything else, local courts "almost always operated in the shadow of important local magnates and their followings."¹⁰⁰ Thus bishops were both kings' representatives and local magnates in their own right, and their participation in local assemblies reflected both aspects of their authority. Scattered evidence suggests that most took their legal responsibilities seriously. In a memorable scene from Osbern's *vita* of the saint, Dunstan "refused to celebrate Whitsun Mass until three false moneyers had received due punishment"; Eadmer elaborates that when Dunstan heard that the criminals had been punished by losing their hands, he finally began Mass with a "cheerful expression."¹⁰¹ For his part, Bishop Theodred apparently had no trouble ordering all thieves to be hanged high on the gallows, although he may have regretted it later.¹⁰² The images these anecdotes conjure up are not pretty, but if

⁹⁴ III Edgar 5 §1 and II Cnut 18.

⁹⁵ III Æthelred; Hart, *The Danelaw*, 19–20.

⁹⁶ Writs, nos. 51 and 43, respectively.

⁹⁷ Writs, no. 111.

⁹⁸ F 269.

⁹⁹ Fleming, *Domesday Book and the Law*, 28.

¹⁰⁰ Fleming, *Domesday Book and the Law*, 32.

¹⁰¹ VSD, 106; Eadmer, *Vita Sancti Dunstani*, 202–3, quoted in M. Philpott, "Eadmer, his archbishops and the English state," in *The Medieval State: Essays Presented to James Campbell*, ed. J. R. Maddicott and D. M. Palliser (London and Rio Grande, 2000), 98.

¹⁰² G. Needham, *Lives of Three English Saints* (New York, 1966), 55, in Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 184.

reliable, they underscore the contemporary belief that lawlessness was next to ungodliness, and that the promotion of law and order was a pastoral responsibility of the highest order.¹⁰³

As might be expected, some Anglo-Saxon bishops were considered more competent in the judicial arena than others. The legal expertise of Æthelric, bishop of Selsey, would have remained obscure were it not for a description of his participation in the post-Conquest trial of Penenden Heath, where Archbishop Lanfranc fought Odo of Bayeux for the recovery of lands belonging to the archiepiscopal see.¹⁰⁴ Bishop Æthelric was summoned to the trial because he was an acknowledged expert on pre-Conquest law; he was also so old and infirm that he had to be brought by ox-cart.¹⁰⁵ Patrick Wormald once remarked that although “his arrival ‘on a cart’ has sometimes lent an element of the burlesque to historians’ accounts of the episode,” the message was serious: “justice could not be dispensed as it should be in post-1066 England, even with leading lights of the new regime on both sides, unless recourse was had to the accumulated legal wisdom of English experts.”¹⁰⁶ The bishop of the modest see of Selsey was obviously one of them.

Given the legal authority of bishops in local communities, it is not surprising that the spiritual relationships created by donations to the church also had secular benefits. A lay man’s concern for his family’s fortunes after his death, for example, might be eased by appointing a bishop as guardian. The ninth-century patron of Christ Church, Canterbury, Badanoth Beotting entrusted “my wife and children to the lord and to the community and to the foundation after my death, for security and protection and guardianship in the things which they require.”¹⁰⁷ A century later, Æthelric of Bocking expressed the hope that Bishop Ælfstan of London would “protect my widow and the things which I leave her.”¹⁰⁸ Æthelric probably already knew that he had cause to worry: Archbishop Ælfric later stood as advocate (*forespeca*) for the widow when her inheritance was threatened by an accusation of treason made against her dead husband.¹⁰⁹ Men and women who, for a variety of reasons, feared that their final wishes would not be carried out, sometimes also sought the aid of a bishop. Thus Bishop Ælfric of North Elmham, together with Tofi the Proud and Thrym, was appointed executor of Ælfric Modercope’s eleventh-century will.¹¹⁰ Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester, among others, witnessed Ealdorman Ælfheah’s will in the third quarter of the tenth century, while a Bishop Ælfstan, probably of Rochester, and a large group of the

¹⁰³ Archbishop Wulfstan, however, appears not to have supported the death penalty as a general rule (Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 182–7).

¹⁰⁴ *Regesta*, I, no. 69. P. Wormald, “*Laga Eadwardi*: the *Textus Roffensis* and its context,” *ANS* 17 (1995), 263.

¹⁰⁵ Æthelric is described as *vir antiquissimus et legum terrae sapientissimus, qui ex precepto regis advectus fuit ad ipsas antiquas legum consuetudines discutiendas et edocendas in una quadriga* (*Regesta*, I, no. 69[1]).

¹⁰⁶ Wormald, “*Laga Eadwardi*,” 263.

¹⁰⁷ *Wills*, no. 4.

¹⁰⁸ *Wills*, no. 16(1).

¹⁰⁹ *Wills*, no. 16(2).

¹¹⁰ *Wills*, no. 28.

testators' relatives, witnessed the will of Birhtric and his wife in the late tenth century.¹¹¹ The latter relationship is especially interesting given the fact that the ownership of some of the estates in Birhtric's will was, at some point prior to its writing, successfully challenged by the bishop of Rochester.¹¹² Perhaps Ælfstan's witness reflects a rapprochement between the see and the family. A tenth-century lay man who bought an estate with a history of forfeiture also worried that after his death the original owners would try to reclaim it, so he committed both the estate and its title-deed to Archbishop Dunstan, "in order that he might act as guardian to his widow and child."¹¹³ It appears that her husband committed a crime, perhaps suicide, so the estate escheated to the crown in spite of Dunstan's anticipated protection.¹¹⁴ In the eleventh century, Sigreifr's relationship with the bishop of Worcester resulted in the bishop's assignment of the land Sigreifr held from him before his death to one of the bishop's knights, who was to marry Sigreifr's daughter and provide for his widow.¹¹⁵

As the most oath-worthy men in the kingdom, second only to royalty, bishops were powerful allies when it came to vouchsafing transactions. Records of transactions between lay men are rare, for obvious reasons, but they have occasionally survived in cases where bishops and abbots were involved. The terms of a late tenth-century Kentish marriage agreement are only extant because the archbishop, who was a witness, kept a copy for himself.¹¹⁶ Likewise, Bishop Stigand was in possession of one of the three copies of an agreement made between Wulfgeat and Bury St Edmunds regarding the disposition of Wulfgeat's estates *post obitum*.¹¹⁷ The obvious conclusion to be drawn here is that some bishops kept records for local lay men and women. Modest thegns and freemen also benefited from relationships with episcopal communities through the Church's maintenance of local guild and manumission records on their behalf.¹¹⁸ These transactions and others like them demonstrate that confraternity with episcopal foundations, often facilitated by patronage, brought lay men and women into kinship with bishops as well as communities. They could therefore count on their support in a variety of ways, just as they would have relied on the support of their own kinsmen.

Often the benefits accruing to patrons were even more tangible than those already discussed. Sources demonstrate that diocesans obtained mortgages on the lands of their clients who were about to embark on pilgrimage, providing them money in return for the mortgage, which could then be discharged if they returned safely. A Selsey charter records that in the tenth century Archbishop Wulfhun purchased 5 hides at Up Marden from Wiohstan on the occasion of his departure to Rome on pilgrimage with his wife and son, in return for 2,000 silver pennies

¹¹¹ *Wills*, nos. 9 and 11, respectively.

¹¹² See below, 173.

¹¹³ *RASC*, no. 44.

¹¹⁴ *RASC*, 338.

¹¹⁵ F 1651.

¹¹⁶ *RASC*, no. 77.

¹¹⁷ *RASC*, no. 100.

¹¹⁸ Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History*, 119–27.

and a horse.¹¹⁹ Since Up Marden did not belong to the bishopric in 1066, the family must have returned safely and redeemed their land. Bishop Ealdred, too, took a mortgage on the lands of Ulf and Madselin for 8 marks of gold, to be settled if they returned from a pilgrimage, and another on Koddi's lands in return for £3.¹²⁰ Besides the willingness of episcopal communities to underwrite the pious endeavors of their parishioners, these transactions demonstrate that the wealthier sees apparently kept a supply of cash on hand.

There were clearly two dimensions to these transactions, the one social and the other spiritual. English bishops not only supported the pious endeavors of lay people such as the distribution of alms and pilgrimage, but they also facilitated lay patronage of other religious houses. The will of Wulfric Spot, Burton's primary benefactor, also contains a bequest of an estate to the local bishop, and one to Ælfric, archbishop of Canterbury, "in the hope that he may be a better friend and supporter of the monastery which I have founded."¹²¹ In the same vein, Countess Æthelgifu's generosity to Ramsey was mediated by the bishop of Elmham, who retained a copy of the transaction on behalf of both parties, while Wulfruna's establishment of Wolverhampton was apparently done with the archbishop of Canterbury's consent.¹²² A spirit of cooperation, and perhaps even friendship, probably prevailed in most instances. It is likely that Earl Leofric and his wife Godgifu shared responsibility with the bishop of Dorchester for the establishment and maintenance of the community at St Mary's Stow. The charter recording their plan to enrich the community declares that they have done so with the bishop's permission and that he was still entitled to the *feorm* such as his predecessors had before him.¹²³ The refoundation was begun by the bishop's predecessor, but it was finished in grand style with the aid of this wealthy and powerful family.

As much as bishops could be powerful allies, however, they could be equally powerful enemies, and much of the evidence depicting episcopal participation in lawsuits describes litigation against fellow churchmen, powerful aristocrats and local families. It goes without saying, however, that the evidence for legal proceedings in later Anglo-Saxon England is uneven at best. Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester's tireless legal efforts on behalf of his churches would be obscure, for instance, were it not for the production of a remarkable text, the *Libellus Æthelwoldi*, which was preserved as a part the monastery of Ely's house history.¹²⁴ A straightforward reading of the text suggests that Æthelwold had many suits going at the same time over many years on behalf of this one

¹¹⁹ Kelly, *Charters of Selsey*, no. 16 and 66–70.

¹²⁰ F 1065. Likewise the bishop of London held a mortgage on one virgate of land in Hertfordshire held by two of his men (F 775).

¹²¹ P. Sawyer, *The Charters of Burton Abbey* (London, 1979), no. 29.

¹²² S 1809 and 1380. M. Meyer, "Women and the tenth-century monastic reform," *Revue Bénédictine* 87 (1977), 49–51.

¹²³ RASC, no. 115.

¹²⁴ The *Libellus Æthelwoldi* is to be published as part of *Anglo-Saxon Ely: Records of Ely Abbey and its Benefactors in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries*, ed. and trans. S. Keynes and A. Kennedy (forthcoming). I am grateful to the authors for allowing me to see a draft translation.

monastery alone, and that he was both shrewd and tenacious. That he apparently always won may be an issue of selection, but articulate and literate bishops must have often prevailed against their less articulate, and often illiterate, opponents. In any case, this tract reveals a decidedly different side of the bishop than that presented in his *vita*, which, understandably, emphasizes his holiness and his pastoral ministry. It is not clear if Æthelwold dedicated as much effort to the preservation and aggrandizement of Winchester's patrimony; the evidence described in the previous chapter certainly mitigates against it.

According to Eadmer, Bishop Wulfstan II of Worcester was "unrivaled in his knowledge of the ancient customs of England," and post-Conquest records indicate that he, unlike Æthelwold, used his skill on behalf of his see.¹²⁵ Wulfstan capitalized on the opportunity of a jurisdictional dispute between Archbishops Lanfranc and Thomas to renew the see's claim to villages Archbishop Ealdred of York had, he argued, wrongfully retained from Worcester.¹²⁶ Likewise, Wulfstan's re-invigoration of a long-standing land dispute between his community and the monks of Evesham corroborates the image of a tenacious protector of his see's patrimony. When Abbot Æthelwig of Evesham, Wulfstan's equal in assertiveness and competence, died in 1077, the bishop pressed his suit against Æthelwig's less-capable successor, Walter, and Wulfstan not surprisingly emerged victorious.¹²⁷ Hemming's Cartulary, the record of Worcester's title-deeds and a great deal more, was commissioned by Wulfstan and bears witness to his unwavering interest and expertise in the matter of landholding. Wulfstan reportedly ordered Hemming to dust off the monastery's records and copy the individual charters and memoranda into a single volume, thereby commissioning, in Darlington's words, "the most lasting memorial of the efficient administration of Wulfstan in secular affairs."¹²⁸

Since Æthelwold and Wulfstan of Worcester were monk-bishops who later became saints, the historiographical emphasis has always been on their holiness, an emphasis that tends to obscure other important aspects of their careers. Giso of Wells' fight to recover the see of Wells' lands, recorded in a rare autobiographical treatise, has also received less than due consideration. The tract is a record of Giso's aggressive, and largely successful, campaign undertaken after the Conquest to recover not just the lands that pre-Conquest kings and earls allegedly stole from the bishopric, but lands taken by a variety of churchmen, including Archbishop Stigand and an abbot of Glastonbury.¹²⁹ Because he was a secular bishop and a royal priest, Giso's achievements were almost completely ignored by twelfth-century historians, despite his obvious success as a pastor, administrator and litigator.

Bishops like Æthelwold, Wulfstan and Giso were undoubtedly very well liked

¹²⁵ *HN*, 46–8.

¹²⁶ *VSW*, i, §13, ii, §1.

¹²⁷ *Regesta*, I, nos. 134–5. See Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, 110–13 and 135–41 for a discussion of these cases.

¹²⁸ *The Vita Wulfstani of William of Malmesbury*, ed. R. R. Darlington (London, 1928), xlii. Cf. Tinti, "From episcopal conception," 233–62.

¹²⁹ *Historiola*, 15–20 and *Regesta*, I, no. 287. See also Keynes, "Giso," 203–71.

by the members of their communities, who could appreciate their expertise. Recall Orderic's account of how the monks of St Évrout criticized Abbot Thierry for his *un*-worldliness, arguing that "a man like this has no right to be abbot, for he cannot understand practical affairs and neglects them."¹³⁰ There is also a remarkable note in Hemming's Cartulary that when Wulfstan prayed for the soul of Abbot Æthelwig, who had died of a terrible disease, Wulfstan himself was temporarily stricken with the same disease; he was then told in a vision that he was stricken because he prayed for someone who had harmed the interests of the Church of Worcester!¹³¹ Even William of Malmesbury found grudging respect for prelates who protected the Church's patrimony. Although he stressed at every turn Wulfstan's righteousness, he also chose to highlight his skill as a litigator, noting how often he emerged victorious over a variety of important and intelligent men.¹³²

Internecine squabbles among churchmen over property doubtless caused hard feelings on occasion, but the sources do not suggest that they typically resulted in longstanding animosities, the likes of which might have interfered with the Church's unity. It is difficult to know if the same can be said, however, of litigation between bishops and local families who fought to prevent the erosion of patrimonies through grants to the Church. The potential was certainly there to destroy spiritual relationships created through acts of patronage when the donor's family members refused to honor his or her wishes. Reversionary grants, in which the donor's family was to have use of the property for a period of time before the bequest went into effect, doubtless posed the most serious threat to the Church's ability to enforce the terms of wills, especially when circumstances changed. Canterbury's early eleventh-century acquisition of the estate at Halton in Buckinghamshire is a case in point. Wulfnoth apparently bequeathed it to his wife (or daughter) in reversion to Christ Church, Canterbury, but Toki, a family member, begged a life-lease from Archbishop Æthelnoth.¹³³ Toki's exact relationship to Wulfnoth is not clear; Robertson thought he might have been the donor's son-in-law, but it is also possible, as Nicholas Brooks has argued, that he was the widow's second husband.¹³⁴ In any case, Archbishop Æthelnoth approved the life-lease, which was then renewed by his successor, Archbishop Eadsige.¹³⁵ The risks of extending life-leases are made clear, however, in the fact that Halton was not in the hands of the archbishopric in 1066; somehow, after Toki's death, it fell into the hands of Earl Leofwine.¹³⁶ How Leofwine came to hold the estate is unclear, but it is accounted, apparently without controversy, among the archbishop's lands in 1086. In other cases, though, reversionary grants were apparently difficult to enforce in the wake of the Norman Conquest. Christ

¹³⁰ OV, 53.

¹³¹ Hemming, i, 272–3.

¹³² VSW, ii, §1.

¹³³ RASC, no. 80.

¹³⁴ RASC, p. 403 and Brooks, *Early History*, 301.

¹³⁵ Another thegn, Toki, begged the archbishop for an extension of the lease on Halton, which he admits should have reverted to Canterbury upon his wife's death (RASC, no. 90).

¹³⁶ DB, i, 143b.

Church never received Wimbish in Essex, for instance, which had been bequeathed by Thurstan in the early 1040s.¹³⁷ The terms of the will gave his wife usufruct, but the estate passed to her Norman successor and not to Christ Church, as it ought to have done.¹³⁸ Likewise, a relatively detailed entry in the folios of Domesday Worcestershire records that Wulfwine had “purchased” 4 hides in Selly Oak (Warwickshire) from the bishop of Chester for three lives. Upon his deathbed he reportedly called the bishop of Lichfield, his wife and son, and some friends together to hear how he wanted to dispose of the property: “hear me, my friends, that I wish that my wife, while she lives, hold this land, which I bought from the Church. And after her death, the Church from which I took it, should take it back.”¹³⁹ Despite, however, the witness of the bishop of Lichfield, the property ended up in the hands of William fitz Ansculf in 1086 and not the bishop of Chester.

The bishop of Rochester faced even more difficulty making good on the donation of a Kentish estate in the second half of the tenth century.¹⁴⁰ At best the record is convoluted, but it appears that several generations of one family were involved in this much-discussed case, which, although it was ultimately settled in favor of the bishop, reflects the complexities of aristocratic gift-giving. Originally, it would seem that one Æscwyn had given the bishopric of Rochester the estate of Snodland, including the title-deeds. Her son, Ælfric, apparently paid some priests of Rochester to steal the title-deeds from the bishop. After he (the son) died, the bishop sued before the king and his councilors, successfully, to get the title-deeds to Snodland back from Ælfric’s widow, Brihtwaru. Apparently all of the widow’s property was forfeited to the king on account of the theft, whereupon the bishop purchased the title-deeds to Bromley and Fawkham as well, but not without “argument and persuasion,” as well as 15 mancuses of gold and 130 pounds of silver.¹⁴¹ But the dispute did not end there. Once King Edgar died, Brihtwaru’s kinsman Brihtric apparently convinced her to try and recover the lands. We are told that the “Earl Edwin and the section of the public which was the adversary of God . . . compelled the bishop to give up the title-deeds, under penalty of losing all his property.” Thus Brihtwaru was back in possession, presumably, of all three estates.

By all accounts, this was a contentious issue, but it may have created less animosity than the Rochester account implies. In the first place, the bishop’s purchase of Bromley and Fawkham from the king may have been an act of kindness to Brihtwaru, who had lost everything. After he recovered the title-deeds to Snodland from Brihtwaru and purchased the deeds to Bromley and Fawkham from the king, the bishop apparently gave her a life-lease on all three properties. It is thus not clear why she and her kinsman, Brihtric, went to such lengths to

¹³⁷ *Wills*, nos. 30 and 31.

¹³⁸ DB, ii, 69v.

¹³⁹ F 1680.

¹⁴⁰ RASC, no. 59. See P. Wormald, “Charters, law and the settlement of disputes,” in his *Legal Culture in the Early Medieval West. Law as Text, Image and Experience* (London and Rio Grande, 1999), 298–301, 311.

¹⁴¹ S 671 appears to be a record of the transaction between the king and Ælfstan, bishop of Rochester.

recover the actual deeds. Moreover, the will of the same Brihtric and his wife, Ælfswith, survives, and shows them to be generous benefactors of St Andrew's, Rochester. The couple donated to St Andrew's two ploughlands at Denton and two ploughlands at Longfield, as well as 30 mancuses of gold, a necklace of 40 mancuses, a silver cup, half a gold headband, two day's food-rent per year each from four estates, all for their souls and the souls of their ancestors.¹⁴² Furthermore, they granted the estate at Darenth to Brihtwaru for her lifetime, after which it was to pass to St Andrew's, while another beneficiary was required to pay 1,000 pence to St Andrew's upon his inheritance of the estate of Birling. The will further states that upon Brihtwaru's death, Fawkham was to go to Rochester "for her husband Ælfric and his ancestors, in accordance with their will; and Bromley after Brihtwaru's day to St Andrew's as her husband Ælfric bequeathed it, for him and his ancestors; and Snodland also to St Andrew's after her day, as Ælfheah, Ælfric's father bequeathed it, and Ælfric afterwards." In her comments about this will, Dorothy Whitelock noted that it is difficult to reconcile how it was that Brihtric was able to bequeath these estates in his will, which seemingly belonged to Brihtwaru's family; this is just one of the many pieces of the puzzle not explained by the sources.¹⁴³ In any case, the generosity of this wealthy thegn and his wife indicated in one source undermines the implication in another that there was great animosity between the family and the episcopal see.¹⁴⁴

The evidence related to the community of Rochester's dispute with this wealthy family, which, it turns out, was probably its greatest local benefactor, reveals some of the complexity involved in alienating family property to the Church. The unusual richness of the record provides a salutary warning against extrapolating too much from one-sided sources. Litigation was doubtless unavoidable in many instances, but it did not automatically cause hard feelings. Undoubtedly the social links that families forged with episcopal communities were ongoing, which means that there was plenty of room for bargaining. The resolution of a disagreement almost always resulted in compromise; thus, while one party might be awarded possession of an estate, it was often the case, as we have seen, that that estate was leased back to the loser. Barbara Rosenwein identified the same dynamic in the great monastery of Cluny's dealings with its patrons and neighbors, writing that "the alternation – indeed, simultaneity – of enmity and friendship was a continuous social process; neither one was a permanent stance begun or ended by a donation or a quitclaim."¹⁴⁵

The tenorial chaos of the Conquest, which sent communities across the kingdom scrambling to solidify their claims to property bequeathed either outright or in reversion by Anglo-Saxons, prevents us from gaining a clear understanding of the relationships between churches and landholders. The experiences of the bishoprics with the great magnates – royal, aristocratic and even

¹⁴² *Wills*, no. 11.

¹⁴³ *Wills*, 129.

¹⁴⁴ Although the community lost Bromley to a thegn of King Æthelred's briefly in the late tenth century, it was in possession of all three estates in 1066 (DB, i, 5v).

¹⁴⁵ Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of St Peter*, 58–9.

ecclesiastical – in the decades leading up to and immediately after the Conquest, remind us that our knowledge of the relationships between donors and communities is uneven at best. The circumstances behind the acquisition of a significant amount of ecclesiastical property in the eleventh century by the various members of Earl Godwine's family is a case in point. Canterbury's endowment on the eve of the Conquest would have been several hundred pounds higher had it not been for this family's sticky fingers, and it is tempting to view these acquisitions, as well as the twenty-one burgages in Romney and 225 in Hythe the earl held from the archbishop, as straightforward acts of predation.¹⁴⁶

Harold, successor to his father's earldom of Wessex and earl of East Anglia in his own right, also figures quite often in the sources as a predator of episcopal property. In Hereford, Harold appears to have acquired some ten estates worth about £30, perhaps during the short tenure of his chaplain, Leofgar, as bishop.¹⁴⁷ Other sources describe in plain terms how Harold had helped himself to estates belonging to the bishops of Exeter and Wells.¹⁴⁸ His brothers were also allegedly guilty of despoiling bishoprics; the Worcester monk Hemming charged Swein with robbing the bishopric, while the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* accused Tostig of robbing God.¹⁴⁹ Earl Gyrth also held the Essex estate of Little Warley that belonged to St Paul's, London.¹⁵⁰ Other noblemen in possession of episcopal estates included Earl Leofwine, who held two Canterbury estates worth about £85, and Earl Leofric and assorted members of his family, who were not remembered fondly at Worcester, despite being benefactors of the communities at St Mary's, Stow and Coventry.¹⁵¹

In evaluating the attitudes of the earls and their families to the Church, and their relationships with the kingdom's episcopal communities, it must be remembered that *bona fide* leases probably lay behind many of these tenancies, leases that were granted in return for their support. Queen Edith's tenancy of the caput manor of Sherborne in 1066 is perhaps to be understood in this context, as payment for her support of Herman, bishop of Ramsbury's effort to unite the bishoprics of Ramsbury and Sherborne.¹⁵² It is not hard to see how and why the nature of some of these transactions, especially those having to do with Harold Godwineson, would have been recast after the Conquest. The post-Conquest tenurial revolution forced most ecclesiastical foundations to paint their business and personal relationships with the English aristocracy, the losers at Hastings, in a very harsh light after the Conquest. Given the relative dearth of contemporary, pre-Conquest notices of ecclesiastical animosity toward earls and thegns, one suspects that in the process of proving title to lands after 1066, English ecclesiastics found it necessary to suppress the actual details behind the lay tenure of some

¹⁴⁶ *DM*, 92; *DB*, i, 4v. Fleming, "Rural elites," 13.

¹⁴⁷ *DB*, i, 181v–182v. C. P. Lewis, "The Norman settlement of Herefordshire under William I," *ANS* 7 (1984), 199.

¹⁴⁸ *RASC*, 226; *Historiola*, 15–18.

¹⁴⁹ Hemming, i, 275–6; *ASC*, s.a. 1052, 1065 (C).

¹⁵⁰ *DB*, ii, 10b.

¹⁵¹ *DB*, i, 127r and 143v; Hemming, i, 260, 261–2, 265; *S* 1232 and *RASC*, 461.

¹⁵² *DB*, i, 82r.

of their estates and to distance themselves from many of their one-time friends. The pruning of obituary lists, a desperate act of revisionism by any account, is a reminder of the devastating effect of the Conquest on the historical memory of the English Church as well as our ability to interpret it.

Rights over Men and Property

However bishops and their communities got along with their neighbors, the evidence discussed above underscores the complexity of episcopal interaction in local communities. Their authority in the dioceses was further enhanced by the acquisition of rights over property and men in the kingdom's urban communities, in addition to a range of non-tenurial resources, such as rights to the profits of justice and commerce, many of which also pertained to the kingdom's towns. The previous chapter's survey of episcopal holdings in towns in Domesday Book provided some sense of the magnitude of these holdings but did not examine them in any detail. Bishops acquired urban property for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was to provide a place for them to stay while conducting shire-court business.¹⁵³ Many bishops, like their secular counterparts, also acquired rights to the profits of justice associated with certain burgesses and urban properties, as well as economic rights usually reserved for kings and earls, and these are perhaps the strongest link between diocesans and townsmen.¹⁵⁴ But because a detailed description of towns was not part of the king's mandate, Domesday Book describes only a few, and even then only anecdotally. In short, even when it is clear bishops profited from their relationships with towns, it is not always possible to determine the substance of these relationships. Urban tenements were leased out like rural holdings, so bishops received rents as we know them, but their greater interest in towns was probably related to the fines associated with legal pleas and various other customs. Occasionally the dues and customs are specified in Domesday Book, although it is not generally clear how long they had been held. The archbishop of Canterbury, for example, had the three forfeitures of theft (*latrocinum*), breach of peace (*pacem fractam*) and robbery (*foristellum*) from twenty-one burgesses in Romney who belonged to his manor of Langport.¹⁵⁵ In the city of Chester, the bishop of Lichfield was entitled to the fines assessed against any freeman who worked on a holy day, and to the fine assessed against merchants for doing business without the approval of the bishop's officer from noon on Saturday until Monday or any other feast days.¹⁵⁶ The king and earl maintained the lion's share of the customs of Chester, but the bishop's presence would have been felt in the person of his reeve, who collected on the rights he enjoyed there. The bishop of Lichfield also maintained a presence in the city, as the twelve lawmen of the city were chosen from among his men as well as the

¹⁵³ See, for example, DB, i, 262 and 246, respectively.

¹⁵⁴ For what follows, I am indebted to Fleming, "Rural elites," 3–37.

¹⁵⁵ F 907.

¹⁵⁶ F 274, 275.

king's and the earl's.¹⁵⁷ These rights in Chester may have been granted to the see partly to make up for what was a relatively poor landed endowment. The bishop of London had unspecified, though probably similar, rights in festival season over forty-six London burgesses attached to his estate at Staines.¹⁵⁸

It is possible that most of the urban interests of bishops amounted to sake and soke, but in the absence of explicit evidence we are left with only a few instances in which sake and soke over urban men and property is specified. Thus the archbishop of York held two houses in Leicester with sake and soke, while the bishop of London possessed the soke only of fourteen houses and 4 acres within the walls of Colchester, and 2 hides outside.¹⁵⁹ The bishop of Dorchester held one messuage in Huntingdon and eighty-odd messuages in Lincoln with sake and soke, and a manor with one carucate near the city of Lincoln with the same.¹⁶⁰ Some rights were obviously more sweeping. Domesday Book records that the archbishop of Canterbury held "a small borough for the archbishop's kitchen" at Seasalter.¹⁶¹ For his part, the archbishop of York was presumably entitled to the fines from pleas from one of seven shires of the city of York; he also held 200 messuages "as the king held his own," and in his own lands in the city "neither the king nor the earl had any customs."¹⁶² Likewise, the bishop of Durham's one house in York was apparently held so freely that he paid "no customary dues to earl or king."¹⁶³ Finally, the bishop of London's fourteen houses in Colchester rendered no customary dues, save scot, to anyone but him.¹⁶⁴

Lands held so freely, both within and outside of towns, amounted to lucrative grants of rights generally reserved to kings and earls. Both could grant them as they did land, as well as the rights they enjoyed to the profits of commerce. Grants of sake and soke often included toll and team, "the right of either taking or being exempt from tolls and the ability to hold a court where people could be vouched to warranty";¹⁶⁵ the bishop of Dorchester, for example, was entitled to toll and team as well as sake and soke on his land outside of Lincoln. Such bundles of rights, both judicial and economic, could be very valuable. Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, acquired one-third of the toll levied in Worcester on each horse load of goods (*seamtoll*) and the toll levied on market trading (*ceaptoll*) by writ of Edward the Confessor.¹⁶⁶ Domesday Book also records that before the Conquest the bishop had the third penny of the borough of Worcester, which was worth £6 per annum.¹⁶⁷ From early on Worcester purportedly also had the toll on two ships

¹⁵⁷ F 269.

¹⁵⁸ S 1478 and 1142.

¹⁵⁹ DB, i, 230 and 11a, respectively. For other examples, see F 989, 1745, 2847, 3195 and 3197.

¹⁶⁰ DB, i, 203 and 336.

¹⁶¹ DB, i, 5.

¹⁶² F 1688, 1699.

¹⁶³ F 1689.

¹⁶⁴ DB, ii, 11r.

¹⁶⁵ Fleming, "Rural elites," 11.

¹⁶⁶ *Writs*, no. 117. As Mason sees it, Edward's grant of "substantial share in profits of Worcester commercial activity as compensation for Archbishop Ealdred's retention of estates" (Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, 91).

¹⁶⁷ F 1656.

due at London, and Rochester, one.¹⁶⁸ The grant of the port of Sandwich to the monks of Christ Church in the eleventh century, if it was legitimate, was lucrative indeed. No one was to have any control over the port save the monks, who were granted the exclusive right to ferry across the haven and to exact the toll of every ship that docked there. They were also granted the right to confiscate half of everything found on the shore as far as a man with a pole could extend his hand.¹⁶⁹ It is no wonder that possession of Sandwich was the subject of continuous litigation.

Because the Domesday scribes only reported on the customs of a handful of Anglo-Saxon towns, the rights enjoyed by bishops were probably much greater than those described above. It is impossible to estimate the impact of the acquisition of royal and seigneurial customs of towns, but it is probably fair to say that the episcopal Church cast a long shadow over many of the kingdom's urban communities. Not only did they hold property and men outright, and adjudicate disputes through the shire and hundred courts, but the evidence, particularly in Domesday Book, indicates that bishops acquired rights typically held by kings and earls, further extending their authority over urban communities. The spiritual component was not completely lacking, as bishops also held churches in some towns where they did not otherwise own property or men. The bishop of Dorchester, for example, held one church in each of the shire towns of Buckingham and Bedford, both of which were substantial holdings. Domesday records the former as "the church of this borough" and the latter as "the church of Bedford;" they were worth £7 and 100s., respectively.¹⁷⁰ Because churches in general and urban churches in particular are so poorly recorded in the survey across the kingdom, the extent of episcopal interest in these holdings cannot be estimated. It seems likely, though, that they were as desirable as urban tenements.

Rights over men and property were also granted to bishops outside of towns. They sought and received exemptions for their rural estates in addition to more significant rights. The archbishop of York not only had sake and soke and toll and team but the king's custom of 2 pennies and the earl's third over his manors in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, while the bishop of Lichfield enjoyed all but the earl's third penny vis-à-vis his holdings in these counties.¹⁷¹ The northern archbishop's lands in Yorkshire, including the lands of Beverley and Ripon minsters, were similarly held, while he claimed all the forfeitures from his lands in Warwickshire save four.¹⁷² The archbishop of Canterbury likewise claimed the forfeiture (*forisfacturam*) on roads outside the city on each side, where the land was his.¹⁷³ Some lands, such as the bishop of Worcester's triple hundred of Oswaldsloew, were held so freely that the bishop was virtually the only authority in the area. The Oswaldsloew immunity, if genuine, carried with it "all the

¹⁶⁸ RASC, no. 1 and EHD, I, no. 66.

¹⁶⁹ RASC, no. 82. See also S 1467, Harold Harefoot's supposed restoration of the grant.

¹⁷⁰ DB, i, 143r and 210v. Archbishop Stigand held the churches of St Martin and St Michael in Norwich, but they were part of his personal holdings (DB, ii, 122v).

¹⁷¹ F 1247.

¹⁷² DB, i, 238r.

¹⁷³ F 899.

payments of justice . . . and all the customs . . . both the king's service and his [the bishop's] own." It was described as an immunity so grand that "no sheriff can have any suit there, neither in any plea, nor in any other case whatever," but the likelihood that this was such a broad-sweeping judicial immunity has been effectively challenged in the last decade.¹⁷⁴ The bishop of Winchester held his Somerset manor of Taunton almost as freely, although there is no mention of the exclusion of royal agents. From a dozen estates that owed dues to Taunton the bishop of Winchester not only collected church and borough dues, but various fines for crimes like breach of the peace (*pacis infractio*), housebreaking (*hainfare*) and thievery (*latrones*).¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, tenants had to appear at the bishop's court three times a year without being summoned. The bishop's manor of Taunton was the nexus of all social, juridical and commercial activity in the area, and therefore must have been more valuable than its Domesday assessment of £50. Similar grants of immunities were purportedly made to the see of Crediton in 933 and to the see of St German's, Cornwall in 1018, although the latter is suspicious in its present form.¹⁷⁶ Immunities such as these were obviously very valuable and some had apparently been purchased. Bishop Eadulf of Cornwall paid King Athelstan £60 in silver for the immunity conveyed in the charter of 933, while Bishop Æthelwold purportedly gave Edgar 200 mancuses of gold and his wife, Ælfthryth, 50 mancuses of gold, for the renewal of Taunton's freedom.¹⁷⁷ A post-Conquest dispute between Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester and the abbot of Evesham reveals that the bishop was willing to concede possession of the land in question, but not lordship over it.¹⁷⁸

Extensive lands held so freely were, however, rare. Patrick Wormald has argued that there is no genuine evidence for Worcester's *de jure* exclusion of the sheriff, nor any documented, contemporary English parallels.¹⁷⁹ He concludes, therefore, that the Domesday immunity probably reflected Bishop Wulfstan's need to formalize TRW what was held by custom TRE. It could also have been, Wormald argues, that many of the pre-Conquest immunities granted little more than sake and soke. Because the devolution of royal and comital rights could be seen to weaken the authority (not to mention drain the purses) of both, grants of any number of the six royal forfeitures (*mundbryce*, *hamsocn*, *forstal*, *fyrdwite*, *flymenafyrmth* and *fihtwite*) and the earl's third penny were far more unusual than grants of sake and soke, toll and team, and *infangenthief*, the right to adjudicate petty thievery. Bishops acquired these thegnly rights over their rural as well as urban men and property. Canterbury, Winchester, York, Hereford and Wells all had "blanket" writs confirming their possession of sake and soke, which could be

¹⁷⁴ F 1644.

¹⁷⁵ F 1354.

¹⁷⁶ S 421. Although the charter granting St German's its early eleventh-century immunity (S 953) was probably forged soon after the Conquest, it may have been based on an authentic tradition (Chaplais, "The authenticity," no. 22).

¹⁷⁷ S 421 and 825, respectively.

¹⁷⁸ P. Wormald, "Lordship and justice in the early medieval kingdom: Oswaldslow revisited," in *Property and Power*, ed. Davies and Fouracre, 121–3.

¹⁷⁹ P. Wormald, "Oswaldslow: an 'immunity'?" in *St Oswald*, 117–28.

lucrative, over their lands.¹⁸⁰ Although the total value of Stigand's demesne at Wymondham is missing, the value of the eighty-eight sokemen who pertained thereto was assessed separately at £20.¹⁸¹ Likewise, all of the freemen who held lands of Brockdish, whose soke belonged to Archbishop Stigand, paid the archbishop 40s. If they did not, then they owed a forfeiture of £4.¹⁸² And each sokeman holding one hide or more from the eight hundreds around Aylesbury rendered one summa of corn plus 4d. to the bishop of Dorchester, who held the church of Aylesbury.¹⁸³

In addition to holding the soke of specific estates, some bishops also appear to have possessed the sokes of entire hundreds, only some of which were comprised solely of their own estates. In the 1950s Helen Cam argued, primarily from the Domesday evidence, that bishops held at least fifty-five of the more than 140 pre-Conquest private hundreds.¹⁸⁴ Although the meaning of "private hundred" has been debated in the last decade, it is likely that these bishops were entitled to collect some of the profits associated with justice from these hundreds.¹⁸⁵ If Cam is correct, the sees of Canterbury and Winchester held the most, at twelve and eleven, respectively, but at least seven other sees held a few.¹⁸⁶ Again, in some of these hundreds the bishop held all the land in question, but in most, he possessed only the soke of the estates. One would expect Canterbury and Winchester to have acquired special privileges over the centuries; it is perhaps telling that less exalted sees like Elmham and Selsey did as well. At the same time, it is also puzzling that most bishoprics held only a handful, scattered across several counties, perhaps indicating that they were acquired piecemeal. A comparison of the Domesday evidence for episcopal sokes with other sources indicates, however, that our understanding of these rights is limited at best.¹⁸⁷ At the very least one imagines that the bishop's presence was powerful indeed (and his profits great) in places where he possessed the soke over large groups of men and women.

Other economic rights accrued to enterprising bishops, such as the possession of markets and mints, although the evidence for both is surprisingly limited. Archbishop Ealdred held a fair at Beverley on the Feast of St John the Baptist, the

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Canterbury (S 985, 986, 1086, 1090); Winchester (S 1151 and 1152); York (S 1159; F 1247); Hereford (S 1101); and Wells (S 1111–13, 1116, 1161).

¹⁸¹ DB, ii, 137b.

¹⁸² DB, ii, 139, 210b.

¹⁸³ DB, i, 143v. In another example, the burgesses of Dover provided the king with twenty ships with twenty-one men each for fifteen days a year in return for the sake and soke of the town (DB, i, 1).

¹⁸⁴ H. Cam, "The 'private' hundred in England before the Norman Conquest," in her *Law-finders and Law-makers in Medieval England* (London, 1979), 67–70.

¹⁸⁵ See Wormald, "Lordship and justice," where it is convincingly argued that there is no relationship in the evidence between the so-called private hundreds and the right to hold courts. Alluding to the Oswaldslow immunity, he observes "the evidence for private court-holding in Anglo-Saxon England is as exiguous as for the exclusion of the king's justices" (135).

¹⁸⁶ Sherborne (6), Selsey (4), Worcester, Dorchester and Wells (3) and North Elmham (1.5). Cam warns against reading too much of a hundred system into Kent, however. She notes that Cnut's writ to Archbishop Æthelnoth (*Writs*, 183) appears to have given him a share in the profits of three-quarters of Kent. The ones listed here are those in which the archbishop appears as the only lord TRE (Cam, "The 'private' hundred," 69, n. 1).

¹⁸⁷ See Hart, *The Danelaw*, Maps 8.7a–c and 251–9.

right to which he was granted by Edward the Confessor. Although some sixty markets are recorded in Domesday Book, Ealdred's market was not, which suggests they were inconsistently recorded.¹⁸⁸ Likewise, we only know about episcopal markets at Hoxne and Methleigh because they were negatively impacted by the Norman Conquest.¹⁸⁹ Evidence of the value of markets, which must have varied widely, is also sparse: only one, the bishop of Winchester's market at Taunton, for one, was valued in Domesday Book as 50s.¹⁹⁰ Also worth mentioning is the right to mint coins. If the sources can be trusted, only a few bishops – the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Winchester, the bishop of Rochester and the bishop of Hereford – possessed their own mints.¹⁹¹ Whatever else the privilege of a moneyer conveyed, Domesday Book records that the bishop of Hereford's moneyer was required to give him twenty shillings one month after he returned from London with fresh dies, while the bishop of Winchester's mint at Taunton rendered 50s.¹⁹²

Because the various rights described above were in the gift of kings and earls, it is not surprising that they were given out on an *ad hoc* basis. It is not possible to speak of "the rights" of the Church in any systematic fashion. Clearly the archbishops and the bishops of Winchester and Worcester were in a better position than most, but even the smallest sees, such as Lichfield, managed to supplement their landed holdings with rights over men and property, many of which belonged to them, but still others that did not. Why kings and earls would grant away such important elements of their authority probably also depended on individual situations. Grants of royal and comital authority could be considered a reflection of weakened central authority, but with grants to bishops the reverse may also be true. Because they were appointed by kings and did not produce dynasties of their own, bishops could be considered, for all intents and purposes, as agents of the state, perhaps even a buffer against the emergence of local aristocratic power. In any case, it is impossible to evaluate the significance of these rights in terms of the cash they produced because of the ways in which they were recorded, but it bears repeating that they must have substantially increased the bottom lines of the communities who were fortunate enough to possess them.

Like the administration of justice, the acquisition of royal and comital rights doubtless made it more difficult for the laity to distinguish between secular and ecclesiastical authority. Those who exercised broad judicial and economic powers cast long shadows over the communities in which they lived and worked. For moderns not accustomed to seeing the Church act in such starkly secular terms, such powers may seem at odds with its pastoral role. But the economic rights acquired by bishops supported their ecclesiastical activities, making it possible to provide, among others things, the grand liturgies that captivated the

¹⁸⁸ HCY, II, 354; Darby, *Domesday England*, Appendix 17.

¹⁸⁹ DB, ii, 379. The market at Methleigh was "reduced to nothing on account of the Count of Mortain's market, which is very near to it" (DB, i, 120v).

¹⁹⁰ DB, i, 87v.

¹⁹¹ DB, i, 179; *Writs*, 445.

¹⁹² DB, i, 179r and 87v, respectively; H. Loyn, "Boroughs and mints," in his *Society and Peoples: Studies in the History of England and Wales c. 600–1200* (London, 1962), 95.

hearts and minds of clergy and laity alike. Archbishop Wulfstan certainly believed that God loved societies that obeyed the law, ecclesiastical as well as secular, and that only the Church was in a position to interpret both. At the end of the day, the attitude of the Anglo-Saxon Church was extremely pragmatic: in short, do what had to be done, even if that meant occasionally going to extremes. This was particularly the case with regard to participation in warfare, as chapter 2 discussed, when, on occasion, protecting the flock meant literally taking up arms in their defense. It remains to consider in this chapter how meeting their general obligations in defense of the kingdom deepened diocesans' involvement in the rituals of secular society, particularly lordship. While lordship had no overtly pastoral dimensions, bishops (and abbots) were great landholders, and as such they could not hold themselves aloof from one of the fundamental social bonds of English society.

Power and Prestige

The defense of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom was a collective responsibility generally determined on the basis of landholding.¹⁹³ Although book-land had become a hereditary possession and was freed from certain other obligations to the king by the late Anglo-Saxon period, its holder was still responsible for the triple burdens of *fyrð*-service, bridge-work and borough-service (i.e. fortification), the foundations of Anglo-Saxon military organization.¹⁹⁴ Documents from Worcester give some sense of the ways diocesans met ordinary obligations. A memorandum from Bishop Oswald notified King Edgar that the bishop had leased lands to retainers on the condition that they "hold themselves available to supply all the needs of the bishop . . . be ready to build bridges . . . [and] . . . fulfill the service due to him or that due to the king."¹⁹⁵ Richard Abels has remarked that although the memorandum does not mention military service explicitly, "a straightforward reading of this text would lead one to conclude that Oswald's tenants were required, by and large, to serve under him, their *archiductor*, in the king's *fyrð* in satisfaction of the see's military obligation to the king arising from its enjoyment of book tenure."¹⁹⁶ Eadric, one of the bishop's tenants, was also the pilot of his ship; he is described in Hemming's Cartulary as *stermannus navis episcopi et ductor exercitus eiusdem episcopi*.¹⁹⁷ Like Oswaldslow, the bishop of Winchester's complex manor of Taunton owed significant *fyrð*-service. The men who held

¹⁹³ For this generally, see R. Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Berkeley, 1988).

¹⁹⁴ Æthelstan's charter for Crediton frees it from the triple burdens as well, but this was rare (*Crawford Collection*, 5).

¹⁹⁵ S 1368, translated in Abels, *Lordship*, 152–3.

¹⁹⁶ Abels, *Lordship*, 154. The texts of Oswald's leases certainly do state that the tenant is responsible for the triple burdens, one of which was "military service against enemies" (*RASC*, 124–6).

¹⁹⁷ Hemming, i, 81; DB, i, 172v.

certain estates of this great manor in Somerset were required to set *in exercitum cum hominibus episcopi*.¹⁹⁸

The organization of episcopal estates for the purposes of defense, whether by leasing property specifically for that reason (as in the case of Worcester) or by simply requiring one's tenants to fulfill this obligation (as at Taunton) is implied in other sources. The triple hundred of Oswaldslow suggests a ship-soke, an arrangement whereby three hundreds were required to supply a ship. Bishop Æthelric of Sherborne's difficulty in meeting his ship-service obligation is spelled out in a writ he issued to Ealdorman Æthelmær complaining that because of the loss of 33 hides he would not easily meet his obligation for the levy of ships in 1008.¹⁹⁹ The bishopric of Hereford's lands in that shire also amounted to 300 hides, although the bishop's men could not account for 33 of them.²⁰⁰ A list recording ship-fyrd-service due from episcopal estates in shires surrounding London, attributed to the bishopric of London, records that some forty-five men were due from thirty-two separate estates totaling about 350 hides, but the bishop of London apparently did not assess service on the basis of hidage: the 7-hide manor of St Osyth contributed four men and the 45-hide manor of Fulham only five.²⁰¹ The responsibility of some bishops for providing ships is implied in other sources such as episcopal wills. At the beginning of the eleventh century, Archbishop Ælfric bequeathed his best ship with sailing tackle, helmets and coats of mail to the king, and he gave ships to the people of Kent and Wiltshire.²⁰² We know that the bishop of Crediton also possessed a ship, as several years later he bequeathed one with sixty-four oars.²⁰³

Some evidence exists as to how bishops contributed to the defense of diocesan boroughs. The post-Conquest *Textus Roffensis* contains a document that may have originally been drawn up between 942 and 988 to record the estates liable for work on Rochester bridge.²⁰⁴ Here it is recorded that the bishop was responsible for the maintenance of several piers, poles and beams from eleven of his estates. The archbishop of Canterbury was also responsible for work on the bridge on the basis of some twenty-three estates.²⁰⁵ Domesday Book records that similar arrangements prevailed with regard to the bridge over the river Dee in Chester: one man was summoned from every hide in the shire, including the bishop's, to maintain it.²⁰⁶ All of these sources reflect the normal course of defense, and during times of relative calm, most bishops probably had little trouble meeting their obligations. When times were tough, however, as they were in the late tenth

¹⁹⁸ DB, i, 87v.

¹⁹⁹ *Writs*, no. 63.

²⁰⁰ DB, i, 182v. Three hundreds held by the bishop of Sherborne in Dorset, Sherborne, Yetminster and Beaminster, may have comprised another ship-soke.

²⁰¹ *RASC*, no. 72.

²⁰² *Wills*, no. 52.

²⁰³ *Crawford Collection*, no. 10.

²⁰⁴ *RASC*, no. 52. N. Brooks, "Church, crown and community: public work and seigneurial responsibilities at Rochester bridge," in *Warriors and Churchmen*, ed. Reuter, 1–20.

²⁰⁵ As Brooks notes, however, not all of the estates were in the possession of the archbishop, which means that he was probably responsible for a territory (Brooks, "Church, crown and community," 6–7).

²⁰⁶ DB, i, 262r.

and early eleventh centuries, it must have been more difficult than most sources let on. This seems to be the implication of the charter evidence for Corscombe in Devon, which indicates that the bishop of Sherborne was forced to surrender the estate to Ealdorman Eadric c. 1010 to pay an outstanding debt related to defense against the Vikings.²⁰⁷

That many bishops met their military obligations on the basis of more personal relationships than those described above is implied by even a cursory reading of an array of evidence, including Domesday Book, which hints at, though never adequately captures, the relationships that local men cultivated with their diocesans. Domesday Book records, for example, that Thorir's father held a hide and half in Wantage hundred TRE, and he "could go where he wished, but for his protection, he commended himself (*pro sua defensione se commisit*) to Bishop Herman."²⁰⁸ It is not clear if Bishop Herman could count on Thorir's father for military service, but other sources are more explicit. In his will, the East Anglian thegn Ælfric Modercope bequeathed items such as his best tent and bed-clothing to his lord, Bishop Ælfric of Elmham, in the event that he predeceased him.²⁰⁹ On the flip side of the coin, Bishop Ælfwold of Crediton, who died c. 1012, bequeathed to his retainers the horses that he had lent them.²¹⁰ If the retainers had died before the bishop, these horses would have been returned to the bishop as heriot in the their own wills.²¹¹ Heriot had become, as Richard Abels has noted, increasingly associated with tenurial succession, but the fact that it was still often paid in kind indicates how closely military service and lordship remained tied both ideologically and pragmatically.²¹² It was through the bonds of lordship that Bishop Æthelwold was able to gain control of two hides at Kensworth, which he had bought from Leofsige, one of his leading men (*suo optimate*), but which he had not finished paying for before Leofsige's death. According to the *Liber Eliensis*, the bishop still owed him 20s., but it was decided that the property would remain with the bishop because Leofsige's heriot had gone unpaid.²¹³

The extant evidence, particularly the wills, is skewed toward East Anglia, so we know more about the men commended to Archbishop Stigand, for example, than we do about the men of most bishops. The thegn Ketel's will shows that he bequeathed to Archbishop Stigand, his lord, the estate at Harling, and granted to him a helmet, a coat of mail, a horse with harness, a sword and a spear, all as heriot.²¹⁴ In another will, Thurstan son of Wine bequeathed to the archbishop of Canterbury, along with Earl Harold, a half mark of gold.²¹⁵ Although Thurstan bequeathed heriot to his royal lord, the bequests of gold to Stigand and Harold

²⁰⁷ S 933; O'Donovan, *Charters of Sherborne*, no. 15. The estate eventually returned to the see as a pious gift by a different lay man (Keynes, "Wulfsige," 73).

²⁰⁸ F 102.

²⁰⁹ *Wills*, no. 27.

²¹⁰ S 1492.

²¹¹ Abels, *Lordship*, 137.

²¹² Ælfwold also bequeathed 160 mancuses of gold, three tents, nine horses, six coats of mail, and several wall-hangings and seat-covers to a variety of kinsmen and churchmen (*Crawford Collection*, no. 10).

²¹³ *Libellus Æthelwoldi*, 42.

²¹⁴ S 1519.

²¹⁵ S 1531.

suggest that he had cultivated relationships with these two powerful men as well. As episcopal lordships went, Stigand's was immense. In Domesday East Anglia alone, more than 1,000 thegns and freemen called him their lord in one way or another; some of these men, like Ketel, were prominent men in their own right. Stigand also maintained relationships with men outside East Anglia, although lordship is not well reported outside of Little Domesday. At least another 100 men were bound to him in places where the archbishop himself held land, but also in shires like Middlesex and Buckinghamshire where he held little.²¹⁶ Stigand's brother, Æthelmær, likewise accumulated a significant following in East Anglia: some 185 men and women in Norfolk and another 200 or so in Suffolk called him their lord.²¹⁷ It looks as though the bishop of Dorchester, on the eve of the Conquest, was in some way the lord of a group of Lincolnshire men through the church of St Mary's, Stow.²¹⁸ Bishop Wulfstan of London counted Leofwine, son of Wulfstan, a late tenth-century Essex landholder, among his men, and we know that Bishop Ælfwold of Crediton had a considerable following since he bequeathed each of his retainers a steed in his will.²¹⁹ And in tenth-century Durham bishops appear to have been lords of men both great and small; insofar as they leased land from him, they swore allegiance to the bishop, becoming his men and rendering a variety of services to him, as well as rent.²²⁰ It goes without saying that most English bishops were not magnates of Archbishop Stigand's caliber, but it stands to reason that the more politically connected and wealthier bishops amassed followings that rivaled those of the kingdom's great earls and noblemen.

The value of these relationships was considerably more significant than the military support some commended men provided. The personal relationships bishops entered into with local lay men and women contributed, albeit in largely immeasurable ways, to the prosperity of their sees. In return for thegnland, which retainers often held of them, bishops received service, land and cash; thus a large following must have compensated to some degree for a small landed endowment. And although a bishop was more oath-worthy than most men in the kingdom, it did not hurt in the court of public opinion to have hundreds, if not thousands, call him their lord. Whatever specific benefits commendation conferred on lords, it was clearly one of the ways that bishops and their secular counterparts projected power in the localities.

This chapter has surveyed the evidence for the various ways in which late Anglo-Saxon bishops were involved in the lives of their parishioners. What is perhaps remarkable about the evidence discussed in this chapter is not that bishops would interpret their powers so broadly, but that elites, beginning with

²¹⁶ See Smith, "Archbishop Stigand," 205.

²¹⁷ A rough count suggests that Æthelmær's men held lands in excess of 18 carucates and 3,300 acres.

²¹⁸ F 1113 and F 1114.

²¹⁹ *Crawford Collection*, nos. 9 and 10, respectively.

²²⁰ "All these townships, as I said, the bishop presented to Ælfred, provided that he be faithful to him and the congregation and render full service (*plenum seruicium*) for them" (*HSC*, §22). See also §24. Craster, "The patrimony of St Cuthbert," 190.

the king, would acquiesce in the accumulation of such broad powers by a group of men whose loyalty, at the end of the day, lay with another king altogether. Overwhelming evidence for the very real and deep piety of the laity in the tenth and eleventh centuries cannot be ignored, but the discussion of lordship reminds us just how attractive bishops and their communities were because of their power and wealth. In some areas, theirs was the only authority in secular as well as spiritual matters. As a result, their influence in local society was both broad and deep. Although the secular power of the episcopate would not diminish, arguably, until the dawn of the modern period, the English Church necessarily changed as a result of the Norman Conquest. Some of the changes amounted to little more than the acceleration of developments already under way, but others represented dramatic breaks with the Anglo-Saxon past. This book thus ends by returning briefly to the issue of post-Conquest mentalities, many of which framed the historical legacy of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

Epilogue

The Norman Conquest of England in the fall of 1066 resulted in religious as well as political upheaval. Although little apparently changed in the immediate aftermath of the battle of Hastings, within four years papal legates, with William the Conqueror's approval, had convened a council at which a handful of Anglo-Saxon bishops and abbots were deposed. Although the remainder served out their terms, no Englishman was appointed to the bench by the Conqueror. There were also substantial changes in the physical landscape of the Church, as a number of sees were moved from their ancient locations to urban centers and still others into existing monasteries. The eventual replacement of all English bishops with Continental churchmen, and the migration of a handful of sees to new locations, were doubtless traumatic enough, but the Normanization of the Anglo-Saxon Church also included the replacement of Old English as the vernacular tongue of the ruling ecclesiastical elite and the sporadic suppression of native liturgical and devotional traditions. Although the effects of the Conquest were felt unevenly across the kingdom's ecclesiastical communities, it was nevertheless the case that the English Church had become, by 1070, a colonial Church. Its rank and file members, by and large, could not understand their leaders, whose ways were often as foreign as their mother tongue.

Despite the trauma of these events, which was real enough, it would be a mistake to overemphasize the effects of the Conquest. The English Church and its traditions proved resilient in a variety of ways, and many of the developments for which the Normans were given credit in the twelfth century were either already underway in the eleventh or owed their inspiration to religious transformations beyond Normandy. Indeed, when the Conqueror's ducal Church, as well as his ecclesiastical decisions in England are taken into account, it is obvious that political considerations dominated his ecclesiastical policy wherever he ruled. Far from representing the piety of the reformed papacy, his was an old-style Church, carefully manipulated for political gain. In reference to William's handling of the English Church, Frank Barlow aptly noted that, "his religious policy was little more than the exercise of his power within a particular sphere."¹ Many have studied the impact of the Norman Conquest on English institutions, including the Church, and the details will not be rehearsed here.² Instead, this book concludes with a brief look at the question of continuity, for it is here that post-Conquest

¹ Barlow, *English Church* II, 56. See also D. Bates, *Normandy Before 1066* (London, 1982), 189–235.

² See, for example, Barlow, *English Church* II; Loyn, *English Church, 940–1154*; M. Chibnall, *Anglo-Norman England: 1066–1166* (Oxford, 1986; rpt Cambridge, 1995); Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*; and Williams, *English and the Norman Conquest*.

historians, in downplaying the resilience of English traditions, did the most damage to the Church's image. In the end, it will be argued that some of the greatest achievements of the English Church in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries were the culmination of efforts begun decades before William the Conqueror and his army of bishops ever set foot on English soil.

New Men and New Sees

Among the more lasting images constructed by Norman and Anglo-Norman historians was that of the greedy, immoral and impious English secular bishop, exemplified by Archbishop Stigand of Canterbury. While some historians, now as then, believe William had the pope's blessing to clear the ranks, he nevertheless waited four years after the Conquest to do anything about it.³ Until then, we are told that the king kept Stigand close to him and treated him with all due respect. Indeed, it is hard to imagine why William allowed his choice for bishop of Lincoln, Remigius, to be consecrated by Stigand if he was really such a spiritual pariah.⁴ Even William of Malmesbury felt the need to explain away the Conqueror's initial deferential treatment of the English archbishop:

it is difficult to assess the value of the courtesies performed to him by the king, when he ceremoniously rose to his feet for Stigand on every occasion, and when he made him walk side by side in a long series of processions through all the bishoprics and abbacies of Normandy.⁵

By 1070, however, the tide had turned, and as is well known, Stigand, his brother Æthelmær and several abbots were deposed in a council held at Winchester over which papal legates presided. According to John of Worcester, charges such as pluralism and usurping the pallium of the rightful archbishop, Robert of Champart, were leveled against Stigand, but the purported crimes of his fellow defendants were apparently not known to later writers. The Worcester monk thought William's actions in this council heavy-handed, assuming the motive was political rather than spiritual: "he stripped of their offices many bishops and abbots who had not been condemned for any obvious cause, whether of conciliar or secular law. He kept them in prison for life simply on suspicion (as we have said) of being opposed to the new kingdom."⁶ Æthelric, the aged bishop of Selsey, was deposed at a subsequent council, a move that John of Worcester flatly deplored: the bishop was, in his words, *non canonice degradatur*.⁷ William of

³ H. E. J. Cowdrey, "Pope Gregory VII and the Anglo-Norman Church," *Studi Gregoriani per la storia della libertas ecclesiae* 9 (1972), 83–4 and C. Morton, "Pope Alexander II and the Norman Conquest," *Latomus* 34 (1975), 362–82.

⁴ *Canterbury Professions*, ed. M. Richter, Canterbury and York Society 67 (1973), no. 32. David Bates has suggested that Remigius purposely avoided consecration by Ealdred in order to deprive him of a claim over his diocese (Bates, *Remigius*, 7).

⁵ *GP*, §23.

⁶ *JW*, s.a. 1070.

⁷ *JW*, s.a. 1070. Æthelric was apparently not formally deposed until 1076 because the pope was unsure he deserved it (Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*, 156).

Epilogue

Malmesbury's lack of knowledge (or interest) in the details of this council suggests they were less remarkable at the time.

It is difficult to evaluate the effect the deposition of these bishops and abbots had on the Church as a whole. In the case of the archbishop, it was probably not the loss of Stigand *per se* that had the most impact as much as the character of the man who replaced him, Lanfranc of Bec. Indeed, the tenor of William's initial ecclesiastical policy was set when he appointed this learned but somewhat old-fashioned monk head of the church in England.⁸ By and large, however, monks would exercise relatively little influence over the Church in the reigns of William and his successors, as the majority of men appointed were secular clerks and many of these royal clerks.⁹ This was despite the fact that Normans and Anglo-Normans continued the trend begun in the tenth century of monasticizing cathedral communities. Indeed, by 1133 ten out of seventeen cathedrals were served by monks rather than canons.¹⁰ There were, by all accounts, many reputable bishops among this cohort, but some appointments, such as three related archbishops of York – Thomas I, his brother Samson, and Samson's son Thomas II – reflect a degree of nepotism unheard of in the Anglo-Saxon Church.¹¹ Frank Barlow put it well when he wrote that “the individuals whom William rewarded with bishoprics in England reveal the different claims on his gratitude, his policy, and the flexibility of his conscience in ecclesiastical matters.”¹² Perhaps the most noticeable change in the post-Conquest period, however, was in the royal policy toward episcopal revenues: the sons of the Conqueror were unscrupulous in taking advantage of episcopal vacancies for financial gain, a policy apparently not practiced by Anglo-Saxon kings.¹³

The importation of mostly Norman clergy represented no significant reform of the English Church, however capable, learned and spiritual many might have been. Indeed, in one respect it represented a step backward. The move toward communal living, which had characterized the Confessor's ecclesiastical policy vis-à-vis the secular chapters, was brought to a screeching halt under the Conqueror with the imposition of traditional cathedral organization, including the allocation of prebends.¹⁴ As Christopher Harper-Bill has recently argued, the abandonment of the communal form of life at York, Wells and Exeter in favor of the more traditional prebendal system probably reflected the practical necessity

⁸ Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*, 146–7.

⁹ Of the 157 bishops spanning the period 1066–1216, only thirty three were monks (Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, Table 2).

¹⁰ R. Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075–1225* (Oxford, 2000), 399. It is also worth noting that no Englishman was appointed to the bench until the 1130s.

¹¹ Williams, *English and the Norman Conquest*, 170 n. 89. Bishop William of Thetford may also have been married, and his son may have been archdeacon of Norwich for a time (Barlow, *English Church II*, 64).

¹² Barlow, *English Church II*, 58. The integrity of one monk-bishop, Remigius of Lincoln, was questioned by William of Malmesbury, who accused him of trading military service at Hastings for an episcopal appointment (*GP*, §177).

¹³ In 1212 alone, the value of the vacancies to the crown was £9,275 (Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, tables 5 and 7).

¹⁴ K. Hughes, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 1949; rpt 1967), 17–18.

of rewarding loyal bishops with more lucrative situations.¹⁵ This is perhaps why, when Bishop Osmund moved the see from Sherborne to Salisbury, he replaced the monastic community with a chapter of secular canons.¹⁶ There is some indication that Walkelin may have intended a similar substitution at Winchester, but it never took place.¹⁷

Modifications made to the ecclesiastical landscape after 1066 suggest that projecting Norman power and extracting revenues from churches were stronger motives than revamping a supposedly decrepit institution. Some of the movement, in particular the migration of rural sees to urban areas, had been anticipated in the Anglo-Saxon period when Leofric transferred his see from Crediton to Exeter in 1050 and Herman left Ramsbury for Sherborne in 1058. Not long after the Conquest, the Norman bishop of Elmham transferred his see to Thetford, beginning a chain of moves that placed the Conqueror's loyal bishops in urban centers across the English kingdom. Among the most significant was Remigius of Dorchester's removal of his see from its remote location in the southern part of the diocese to the city of Lincoln in 1072/3.¹⁸ Other moves followed shortly thereafter, several of which involved the takeover of wealthy abbeys.¹⁹ In most cases, the sites were defensible, and in several, such as Lincoln, Rochester and Salisbury, cathedrals were built adjacent to royal castles.²⁰ The ability of the new regime to project power in the dioceses was furthered by Gundulf, the monk-bishop of Rochester, who oversaw the construction of the important secular symbols of royal authority, the White Tower in London and castles at Rochester and Colchester.²¹

Even if most new cathedrals were not as consciously martial in appearance as Lincoln, they were nevertheless symbols of conquest. As Eric Fernie points out, the speed and thoroughness of the Normans' rebuilding project was unmatched in the Middle Ages.²² All of the Anglo-Saxon cathedrals, and most of the great abbeys, with the exception of Westminster, were replaced with Norman-inspired churches in the fifty years after the Conquest; some very strategic ones, such as those at Canterbury, Lincoln and Rochester, went up almost immediately. Initially, the rationale was that the Normans found the churches of their predecessors too small, but the cathedral Lanfranc built at Canterbury and other early ones were no larger than the ones they replaced. The Normans did not simply update or add to existing cathedrals; they absolutely demolished the old ones. To date, no

¹⁵ Harper-Bill, "The Anglo-Norman Church," 173.

¹⁶ Salisbury is the only example in the post-Conquest period of a monastic cathedral community that was turned back into a secular one (Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 1–4).

¹⁷ H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Lanfranc. Scholar, Monk and Archbishop* (Oxford, 2003), 161.

¹⁸ *EHD*, II, no. 78. Bates, *Remigius*, 11–12.

¹⁹ Sherborne to Salisbury, Selsey to Chichester, Wells to Bath, Lichfield to Coventry via Chester, and Thetford to Norwich. Rochester and Durham were converted from secular to monastic cathedrals in the 1080s.

²⁰ Bates, *Remigius*, 15, 19; E. Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England* (Oxford, 2000), 115; Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*, 162. Salisbury Cathedral was actually built within the castle's bailey (Fernie, *Architecture*, 153).

²¹ Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*, 155. See also M. Ruud, "Monks in the world: the case of Gundulf of Rochester," *ANS* 11 (1988), 248.

²² A detailed discussion of Norman architecture can be found in Fernie, *Architecture*, chapters 2 and 4.

Epilogue

Anglo-Saxon masonry has been found in the fabric of any Norman cathedral, which means that they completely demolished the buildings, many of which dated back to the earliest days of the Church and were associated with its most venerable saints. Only the Englishman Wulfstan of Worcester appears to have suffered any remorse at the destruction of the houses built by England's greatest saints.²³ Under the guise of modernization, the Normans turned their backs not just on the cities of the ancients, but on their houses of worship as well. However difficult to measure, the effects of the transformation of the ecclesiastical landscape must have been significant.²⁴

Liturgical and Intellectual Culture

Although ecclesiastical reform was one of the justifications for the Conquest, it should be apparent from the discussion so far that, in many respects, rhetoric did not often match reality. At the very least, the decisions of the Conqueror and his bishops were undertaken in the complex context of establishing and maintaining authority; thus, no monocausal explanations can ever truly suffice. Indeed, we should be suspicious of the whole concept since, as David Bates has shown, ecclesiastical reform in Normandy itself had very little effect until after 1080.²⁵ In England, however, Lanfranc had a virtually free hand, so it is surprising that changes to the liturgical and pastoral life of the English Church were so minimal, unless we recall that some transformations were already underway in the decades before the Conquest. Lanfranc's reforms were in fact light-handed, tending mostly to accelerate changes already underway. That these changes were not Norman but Roman in inspiration is, again, reflected in the slowness with which the Church in Normandy came to adopt them.

The impact of Lanfranc and the Normans on the liturgical traditions of the English Church has been well studied by Susan Ridyard, David Rollason, Richard Pfaff, T. A. Heslop, and Jay Rubenstein, among others, and was discussed briefly in chapter 1. The replacement at many houses of the *Regularis concordia* with Lanfranc's own customary, the *Decreta Lanfranci*, as well as the initial suppression of some venerable cults at Canterbury and other communities, must have caused a fair amount of unease.²⁶ The cults of major saints, such as Dunstan and Ælfheah, were ultimately restored, but as Rubenstein argues, the

²³ VSW, iii, §10. See also GP, §149.

²⁴ The effectiveness of the new cathedrals as symbols of conquest only increased over time. The new cathedral at Canterbury, begun in the 1070s, was relatively modest in size, with a nave measuring about 164 feet in length, which was comparable to its predecessor. The new cathedral at Winchester, however, measured an astounding 266 feet in length, a potent symbol of the stabilization of William's power. Its only contemporary rivals were the great imperial cathedrals of Mainz and Speyer. Cathedrals constructed thereafter, such as at Durham, were built on an even larger scale still unmatched in Normandy. Eric Fernie has attributed the increase in scale to the Conqueror's growing imperial pretensions (Fernie, *Architecture*, 33). The fact that the Anglo-Norman cathedrals were built from continental and not native models was symbolic in its own way.

²⁵ Bates, *Normandy Before 1066*, 212.

²⁶ Cowdrey, *Lanfranc*, 155–6 and above, 9–11.

remains of some less august saints were removed to the equivalent of the nose-bleed section of Canterbury Cathedral, while others disappeared from calendars across England.²⁷ As far as we know, liturgical change only resulted in violence at Glastobury when the new Norman abbot attempted to impose the chant of Fécamp on the community.²⁸

In terms of the intellectual culture of English cathedrals after 1066, much has been made of the change in focus away from devotional literature and toward patristics apparently initiated by the Normans at libraries all over England. Worcester has been considered one of the more conservative centers in post-Conquest England, but, as Richard Gameson has pointed out, some of the earliest post-Conquest copies of patristics come from that community, which means that Englishmen as well as Normans were participating in a trend that was becoming more universal in the later eleventh century.²⁹ Moreover, the great push to copy large numbers of patristic writings came not in the aftermath of the Conquest but in the very late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.³⁰ What looks like frantic copying activity immediately after the Conquest, Gameson argues, had more to do with factors other than dissatisfaction with contemporary holdings. Canterbury, for one, was gutted by fire in 1067. As Teresa Webber has shown, Salisbury's library was created virtually *ex nihilo*, so it is not clear what happened to Sherborne's books.³¹ There does not appear to have been a centralized program to modernize all English libraries. Rather, changes probably reflected the personal and scholarly tastes, as well as connections, of individual bishops.³² Remigius's library at Lincoln, for instance, bears almost no imprint of "modernization," so he must have found it adequate for his and his community's needs.³³ The development of libraries at new centers further exemplifies the personal quality of collections in this period: when he was through with it, for example, Herbert Losinga's library at Norwich mirrored the interests of the monks of Fécamp, where he had been a monk and prior.³⁴

It is worth remembering that at least one contemporary writer, the Flemish hagiographer Goscelin of St Bertin, had a very low opinion of the level of Norman learning.³⁵ It is also worth noting that liturgical and devotional works,

²⁷ Rubenstein, "Liturgy against history," 279–306; T. A. Heslop, "The Canterbury calendars and the Norman Conquest," in *Canterbury and the Norman Conquest*, ed. R. Eales (London, 1995), 53–85. Lanfranc's suspicion may have been contagious: Abbot Walter of Evesham apparently subjected his community's relics to fire; when they passed, he sent them on tour to drum up money for the rebuilding of his church (Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 223–4).

²⁸ ASC and JW. s.a. 1083.

²⁹ Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 15.

³⁰ Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 20. For the argument that the Conquest impeded the development of Romanesque manuscript illumination, see C. R. Dodwell, *The Canterbury School of Illumination, 1066–1200* (Cambridge, 1954), 5–6.

³¹ Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, introduction.

³² Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 15.

³³ According to a booklist, there were only forty-four volumes in the Lincoln library in 1148 (Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 16).

³⁴ Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 10.

³⁵ The "Liber Confortatorius" of Goscelin of St Bertin, ed. C. H. Talbot, *Studia Anselmiana* 37, *Analecta Monastica* 3rd ser. (Rome, 1955), 29 and 82, in Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 6.

Epilogue

including psalters, Gospel-books, Bibles and copies of the *Pastoral Care* or *Rule* of St Benedict were *not* produced in any great number, leading to the conclusion that adequate supplies of these texts already existed. That the Normans found Anglo-Saxon pastoral texts suitable to the task at hand is further suggested by the additions and emendations made to hundreds of English manuscripts in the decades following the Conquest.³⁶ A recent collection of essays, *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, underscores the level of continuity of Anglo-Saxon traditions: in particular, Elaine Treharne's analysis of five collections of religious texts produced between 1100 and 1160 demonstrates that Anglo-Saxon homiletic and religious thinking still dominated a century after the Conquest.³⁷ Likewise, Mary Swan shows that Ælfric's homilies were not simply recopied but recontextualized for a variety of purposes; as a result, she argues, they must have been "profoundly integrated into popular homiletic traditions."³⁸ As for the fate of Old English in general, Susan Irvine shows that the language remained of interest, and not just antiquarian, to the Anglo-Normans of the twelfth century, who did a great deal more with it than faithfully copy exemplars.³⁹ It may be that Old English was kept alive in cathedral libraries to bridge the gap between the educated clerks and monks and the priests and parishioners they served. In any case, it seems clear that Anglo-Saxon homiletic, devotional and liturgical texts served the Anglo-Norman Church well.

Pastoral Care

In terms of pastoral care, the greatest changes seem to have come at the administrative level. The Normans are generally credited with the creation of territorial archdeaconries, although, as chapter 4 showed, archdeacons had existed in Anglo-Saxon England.⁴⁰ Although territorial archdeaconries were a feature of the Norman Church, the model was not imported wholesale. English archdeacons, for example, were not enfeoffed with their possessions as their Norman counterparts were. Among the Norman bishops' other servants in the dioceses were the rural deans, whose deaneries were created out of subdivided archdeaconries. Far from being a Norman invention, though, territorial archdeaconries and deaneries were "part of the general tightening of ecclesiastical good order apparent

³⁶ Gameson, *Manuscripts*, 22.

³⁷ E. Treharne, "The production and script of manuscripts containing English religious texts in the first half of the twelfth century," in *Rewriting Old English*, 13, 39.

³⁸ M. Swan, "Ælfric's Catholic Homilies," in *Rewriting Old English*, 82. Indeed, Ælfric's authoritative status is borne out by the additions of Ælfrician material as marginalia to non-Ælfrician material (Swan, "Ælfric's Catholic Homilies," 76). Wulfstan's work was apparently too historically rooted in the events of the early eleventh century to be as enduringly popular as Ælfric's (J. Wilcox, "Wulfstan and the twelfth century," in *Rewriting Old English*, 93).

³⁹ The *Textus Roffensis*, for example, was a new production in Old English (S. Irvine, "The compilation and use of manuscripts containing Old English in the twelfth century," 42–3).

⁴⁰ Barlow, *English Church* II, 49; C. Brooke, "The archdeacon and the Norman Conquest," in *Tradition and Change. Essays in Honour of Marjorie Chibnall presented by her Friends on the Occasion of her Seventieth Birthday*, ed. D. Greenway, C. Holdsworth and J. Sayers (Cambridge, 1985), 1–19.

throughout western Europe at this time.”⁴¹ The effect of the reorganization on pastoral care must have depended, however, on the men appointed as archdeacons and deans. Since the archdeacons were mostly Normans, there is no reason to believe they could communicate, at least initially, any more effectively than their diocesans with local priests and parishioners.⁴² At the very least, they had to have relied heavily on Englishmen to operate with any effectiveness in the dioceses. One English priest, who knew no French, was supposedly “forced to remain dumb in the presence of the bishop and archdeacon.”⁴³

Lanfranc probably attempted to smooth out some of the difficulties brought about by the language barrier through synods. At the national level, Lanfranc’s councils must have looked very much like Anglo-Saxon synods, as they were typically held in conjunction with *witenagemots*. And the topics were doubtless similar, although some, such as clerical celibacy, clearly reflected the greater influence of Gregorian reform on the English Church in the 1070s. There is very little evidence for diocesan synods on either side of the Conquest, but change was clearly in the air, particularly with regard to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. After the council of 1075, it was no longer legal for episcopal pleas to be heard in hundred courts, an attempt to separate ecclesiastical and secular jurisdiction for the protection of the Church. The law did not apply to the shire courts, and thus did not affect episcopal involvement in this arena, but was instead aimed at freeing archdeacons from their dependency on royal authority and allowing for the greater influence of universal church law emanating from Rome.⁴⁴ In a similar vein, trial by ordeal was removed from the sheriff’s control and placed in the bishop’s.⁴⁵ It is possible that diocesan synods were increasingly more common in the Anglo-Norman period, but the evidence is not forthcoming, and we are left with the sense that if a great many priests had difficulty communicating with their bishops and archdeacons for any length of time, the nature of pastoral care at the level of the parish changed only gradually indeed.

When all is said and done, a respectable tradition of pastoral care was, in fact, one of the more lasting legacies of the Anglo-Saxon Church, post-Conquest polemics notwithstanding. Bishops had established pastoral outreach as a priority in the later tenth century with a renewed effort to provide the means for it, not just by cathedral and parish clergy but by a host of monks throughout the kingdom. The efforts of Ælfric and his episcopal patrons were followed up in the eleventh century by Wulfstan’s program of regeneration for the English monarchy and people, a program whose synodical context is suggested by the manuscript evidence. At the same time, the participation of the Anglo-Saxon clergy in a variety of Continental reform movements was signified not just by the incorporation of new fashions into the life and liturgy of the Church but by the active

⁴¹ Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*, 163.

⁴² Barlow, *English Church II*, 58.

⁴³ John, abbot of Ford, *Life of Wulfric of Haselbury*, ed. M. Bell, *Somerset Record Society* 47 (1933), 1.14, in Bartlett, *England*, 401.

⁴⁴ Harper-Bill, “Anglo-Norman Church,” 174. See also Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*, 163.

⁴⁵ Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation*, 164.

Epilogue

participation of a series of bishops in the reforming papal councils in France and Italy starting in the 1040s. It is worth noting, too, that the effort to evangelize Scandinavia, which bore such fruit in the twelfth century, was launched from England in the late tenth.⁴⁶ These were the traditions the Normans and Anglo-Normans inherited, and despite the virtual free hand of the conquerors to impose change, what changes were made were simply not that substantive. Some bishops moved their sees to different locations, many built new libraries, and most reorganized their cathedrals and dioceses along familiar, Continental lines, but in the end, few of these changes reflected any programmatic effort on the part of either king or archbishop to uniformly change the Church in England. As it turns out, the homiletic tradition of the Anglo-Saxons remained at the heart of Anglo-Norman pastoral practice. If anything, the effect of the Normans was felt primarily at the Church's highest level: bishops became increasingly more involved in the politics and military affairs of the realm; nepotism and simony increased substantially; and the Conqueror and his sons exploited both the talents of the bishops and the revenues of their sees in unprecedented fashion. At the level of the parish, however, these things mattered far less to a population recently traumatized by conquest than the fact that the rituals in which they participated, the sacraments they received, and the sermons they heard belonged not to the Church of the conquerors but to the Church of Anglo-Saxons like Æthelwold, Wulfstan and Leofric.

⁴⁶ See L. Abrams, "The Anglo-Saxons and the Christianisation of Scandinavia," *ASE* 17 (1995), 21–40.

Appendix

Value of Episcopal Holdings

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
CANTERBURY	Kent*						
<i>archbishop's lands:</i>	Darenth	2	14	0	:		
3r-5r	Otford	8	60	0	:		
	Old Bexley	3	12	0	:		
	Crayford	4	12	0	:		
	East Malling	2	9	0	:		
	Northfleet	6	10	0	:		
	Wrotham	8	15	0	:		
	Maidstone	10	14	0	:		
	Gillingham	6	15	0	:		
	Reculver	8	14	0	:		
	'Northwood'	13	24	5	:		
	Petham	7	17	6	:		
	'Estursete'	7	25	12	:		
	Bishopsbourne	6	20	0	:		
	Boughton Street	6	16	3	:		
	Charing	8	24	0	:		
	Pluckley	1	12	0	:		
	Wingham	40	77	0	:		
	Mersham	6	10	0	:		
	Aldington	21	62	0	:		
	Lympne	0	12	0	:		
	Stowting	2	8	0	:		
	St Martin's	2	11	0	:		
	Lyming	7	24	0	:		
	Newenden	1	5	0	:		
	Farningham	1	7	0	:		
	Eynsford	6	16	0	:		
	Brasted ^c	2	10	0	:		
	Ulcombe ^c	3	10	0	:		
	Boughton Malherbe	1	2	0	:		
	Leaveland	1	0	30	:		
	Graveney	1	5	0	:		
	Lenham	2	8	0	:		
	Sheppey	1	2	30	:		
	Teynham	6	50	0	:		
	Buckland	0	0	10	:		
	Finglesham	1	2	0	:		
	Berwick	1	3	0	:		
	Tilmanston	1	1	0	:		

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
CANTERBURY (cont.)	Sandlings ^c	2	8	0	:		
7r	Sandwich	n/a	40	0	:		
<i>monks' lands:</i>	East Peckham	6	12	0	:		
	Hollingbourne	6	20	0	:		
	Meopham	10	15	10	:		
	East Farleigh	6	16	0	:		
	Cliffe	4	6	0	:		
	Monkton	20	20	0	:		
	Ickham	4	22	0	:		
	Northgate (Canterbury)	1	17	0	:		
	Seasalter	n/a	0	25	:		
	Preston	1	10	0	:		
	Chartham	4	12	0	:		
	Godmersham	8	12	0	:		
	Great Chart	3	12	0	:		
	Little Chart	3	5	0	:		
	Westwell	7	17	11	:		
	Eastry (and Geddinge)	7	26	10	:		
	Addisham	17	40	0	:		
	Warehorne	1	1	0	:		
	Appledore	2	6	0	:		
	one manor in Wye Hund.	1	0	50	:		
	'asmeland'	1	0	53	:		
		321	955	255	968 :	20%	73%
16r–16v	Sussex						
	South Malling ^c	80	40	0	:		
	Wooton	6	4	0	:		
	Stanmer	20	15	0	:		
	Pagham	50	40	0	:		
	Tangmere ^c	10	6	0	:		
	East Lavant	18	12	0	:		
	Patching	12	12	0	:		
	West Tarring	18	14	4	:		
		214	143	4	143 :	5%	11%
30v–31r	Surrey						
	Mortlake	80	32	0	:		
	Croydon	80	12	0	:		
	Cheam	20	8	0	:		
	Walworth	5	2	0	:		
	Merstham	20	8	0	:		
	East Horsley	14	4	0	:		
		219	66	0	66 :	4%	5%
127r	Middlesex						
	Hayes	59	40	0	40 :	5%	3%
143v	Buckinghamshire						
	Monks' Risborough ^c	30	16	0	16 :	1%	1%

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
CANTERBURY (cont.)	Oxfordshire						
155r	Newington	15	11	0	11 :	0%	1%
	Essex						
8r-8v	Little Coggeshall	1	3	0	:		
	Bocking (+ W. Mersea)	5	24	0	:		
	Stisted	1	10	0	:		
	Lawling	14	12	0	:		
	Latchington	2	1	0	:		
	St Lawrence	3	1	0	:		
	Milton	2	5	0	:		
	Southchurch	4	5	0	:		
	Little Stambridge	1	0	30	:		
		32	61	30	63 :	1%	5%
	Suffolk						
ii, 372v-373r	Hadleigh	5	12	0	:		
	Monks' Eleigh	5	15	0	:		
		10	27	0	27 :	1%	2%
	Total Canterbury^d	900	1,319	289	1,333		
DORCHESTER	Oxfordshire*						
155r-155v	Dorchester ^c	90	18	0	:		
	South Stoke	17	6	0	:		
	Thamec	60	20	0	:		
	Great Milton ^c	40	18	0	:		
	Banbury ^c	50	35	0	:		
	Cropredy ^c	50	28	0	:		
		307	125	0	125 :	4%	58%
143v-144r	Buckinghamshire*						
	Stoke Mandeville	8	18	0	:		
	Buckland ^c	10	10	0	:		
	Gawcott	1	2	0	:		
		19	30	0	30 :	2%	14%
	Cambridgeshire*	0	0	0	0 :	0%	0%
	Huntingdonshire*						
203v	Cotton	2	2	0	:		
	Great Staughton	6	10	0	:		
	Diddington	3	3	0	:		
	Buckden	20	20	0	:		
	Stilton	2	2	0	:		
		33	37	0	37 :	4%	17%
	Bedfordshire*						
209r	Church of Leighton Buzzard	4	4	0	4 :	0%	2%

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
DORCHESTER (cont.)	Northamptonshire*	0	0	0	0 :	0%	0%
230v	Leicestershire*						
	Leicester	10	n/a	0	:		
	Knighton and Leire	2	6	0	:		
		12	6	0	6 :	1%	3%
	Rutland*	0	0	0	:	0%	0%
345r	Lincolnshire*						
	Lincoln	2	n/a	0	:		
	Louth	12	12	0	:		
		14	12	0	12 :	0%	6%
	Total Dorchester	389	214	0	214		
DURHAM	Yorkshire						
304v	Hutton Conyers/ Howgrave	14	10	0	:		
	Crayke	6	0	40	:		
	Sessay	5	0	60	:		
	Knayton	4	0	20	:		
	Brompton	14	0	40	:		
	Girsby	6	0	10	:		
	Deighton	6	0	20	:		
	Winton	6	0	30	:		
	Total Durham^c	61	10	220	21 :	2%	n/a
EXETER	Devonshire*						
101v–102r	Crediton	15	21	0	:		
	Bury	0	0	7	:		
	Bishopsteignton	18	14	0	:		
	Ide	2	2	0	:		
	Staverton	3	7	0	:		
	St Marychurch	0	0	15	:		
	Bishop's Tawton	12	50	0	:		
	Culmstock	5	4	0	:		
	Stoke Canon	1	0	50	:		
	Talaton	7	0	100	:		
	Salcombe Regis	3	0	60	:		
	'Brightston'	1	1	0	:		
	Paignton	20	13	0	:		
	Ashburton	6	8	0	:		
	Chudleigh Knighton	1	1	10	:		
	Bishop's Nympton	3	7	0	:		
	Branscombe	5	6	0	:		
	Dittisham	3	0	60	:		
	Slapton	6	10	0	:		
		111	144	302	159 :	5%	77%

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
EXETER (cont.)	Cornwall*						
120v	Treliever	2	4	0	:		
	Methleith	1	0	40	:		
	Tregear	2	0	11	:		
	Pawton	8	10	0	:		
	Burniere	1	0	40	:		
	St German's church	12	10	0	:		
	Lanherne	1	0	100	:		
	Tinten	1	0	25	:		
	Lawhitton	4	8	0	:		
	Gulval	1	3	0	:		
	St Winnow	1	1	0	:		
		33	36	216	47	7%	23%
	Total Exeter^f	144	180	518	206		
HEREFORD	Herefordshire*						
181v–182v	Didley and 'Stane'	10	2	0	:		
	Woolhope	16	16	0	:		
	How Caple	5	0	40	:		
	Brockhampton	8	0	70	:		
	Preston Wynnec	4	0	65	:		
	Withington	8	0	5	:		
	Ullingswick	6	0	100	:		
	Donnington	1	0	25	:		
	Moreton Jeffries	4	0	100	:		
	Bishop's Frome	10	10	15	:		
	Ross-on-Wye	14	14	0	:		
	Ledbury	5	10	0	:		
	Eastnor	4	4	0	:		
	'Bagburrow'	5	7	15	:		
	Bosbury	6	6	0	:		
	Cradley	12	10	0	:		
	Tupsley	1	0	40	:		
	Shelwick	5	0	53	:		
	Warham	3	0	30	:		
	Canon Pyon	12	12	10	:		
	Huntington	10	4	0	:		
	Holmer	1	0	10	:		
	Moreton on Lugg	4	4	0	:		
	Pipe	1	0	5	:		
	Lyde	2	0	40	:		
	Norton Canon	6	0	60	:		
	Bishopstone	5	3	0	:		
	Wormsley	1	0	4	:		
	Bridge Sollers	5	0	50	:		
	Bromyard	27	45	10	:		
	Little Hereford	4	0	100	:		

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
HEREFORD (cont.)	'Winetune'	1	0	5	:		
	Credenhill	2	0	20	:		
	'Moor'	4	0	15	:		
		211	147	887	191	17%	78%
	Gloucestershire						
	165r Prestbury/Sevenhampton	30	12	0	12	0%	5%
	Worcestershire						
	174r Kyre	2	1	0	1	0%	0%
	Shropshire*						
	252r North Lydbury	53	35	0	:		
	Onibury	3	0	40	:		
257r	Baystonc	1	0	10	:		
		57	35	50	38	4%	16%
	Essex						
ii,26r	Writtle	1	3	0	3	0%	1%
	Total Hereford^g	301	198	937	245		
LICHFIELD	Staffordshire*						
	247r Brewood	5	10	0	:		
	Baswich	5	0	10	:		
	Acton Trusell	5	0	5	:		
	Great Haywood	1	0	40	:		
	Eccleshall	7	4	0	:		
	Ellastone	0	0	9	:		
	Lichfield	26	15	0	:		
	Coley	2	0	10	:		
	Moreton	2	0	5	:		
	Sugnall	n/a	0	10	:		
		52	29	89	33	7%	45%
	Warwickshire*						
	238v Caldecote	2	0	40	:		
	Bishop's Tachbrook	7	3	0	:		
		9	3	40	5	0%	7%
	Shropshire*						
	253r Meole Brace	n/a	0	20	:		
	Shelton	2	0	12	:		
	Longner	1	0	8	:		
	Betton	2	0	15	:		
	Buildwas	1	0	45	:		
	Prees	8	0	50	:		
	'Chatsall'	1	0	8	:		
		15	0	158	8	1%	11%
	Cheshire*						
	263r Farndon	4	0	40	:		
	Tarvin	6	8	0	:		
	Guilden Sutton	1	0	40	:		

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
LICHFIELD (cont.)	Eyton	1	0	5	:		
	Wybunbury	1	0	0	:		
	Burton	3	0	40	:		
	'Redcliffe'	1	0	13	:		
		16	8	98	13	:	
	Derbyshire*						
	Sawley	12	8	0	:		
	Bupton	5	7	0	:		
		17	15	0	15	:	3% 20%
	Total Lichfield^h	109	55	385	74		
LONDON	Middlesex*						
	127r–128r	Stepney ^c	32	50	0	:	
	<i>canons' lands:</i>	Fulham ^c	40	50	0	:	
		Twyford	4	2	20	:	
		Willesden	15	12	0	:	
		Harlesden	5	4	0	:	
		'Rug Moor'	2	0	40	:	
		'Tottenham Court'	5	0	100	:	
		Near St Pancras	5	0	90	:	
		Islington	4	0	80	:	
		Stoke Newington	2	0	40	:	
		Hoxton	3	0	60	:	
		'Stanestaple'	4	0	60	:	
		West Drayton	10	8	0	:	
			131	126	490	151	: 20% 37%
	ii, 9v–14r	Essex*					
		Orsett	13	35	0	:	
		Ramsden	3	0	60	:	
		Wanstead	1	0	40	:	
		Rayne	4	10	0	:	
		Copford	2	8	0	:	
		Bishop's Wickham	3	6	0	:	
		St Osyth	7	18	0	:	
		Clacton	20	40	0	:	
		Chingford	6	4	0	:	
		Belchamp	5	16	0	:	
		Wickam St Paul's	3	0	40	:	
		Tillingham	20	10	0	:	
		Runwell	8	8	0	:	
		'Tidwoldingham'	8	8	0	:	
		The Naze	27	26	0	:	
		Barling	2	4	10	:	
			132	193	150	201	: 4% 49%

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
LONDON (cont.)	Hertfordshire*						
133v	Much Hadham	8	24	0	:		
<i>canons' lands:</i>	Ardeley	6	7	0	:		
136r	Luffenhall	2	0	20	:		
	Sandon	10	20	0	:		
		26	51	20	52 :	4%	13%
<i>canons' lands:</i>	Surrey						
34r	Barnes	8	6	0	6 :	0%	1%
	Total Londonⁱ	296	376	660	410		
NORTH ELMHAM	Norfolk*						
ii,191r	Great Cressingham	2	6	0	:		
	Gaywood	3	13	0	:		
	Thornham	3	14	0	:		
	Tofts	6	0	20	:		
	North Elmham	8	10	0	:		
	Colkirk	2	6	0	:		
	Saxlingham	1	0	20	:		
	Thornage	8	13	0	:		
	Swanton Novers	2	6	0	:		
	Hindringham	4	10	0	:		
	Egmere	3	0	70	:		
	Hindolveston	1	10	0	:		
	Helmington	3	4	0	:		
	Stratton	2	4	2	:		
	Gunton w/ Shipden	3	0	30	:		
	Beighton	3	6	0	:		
	Blofield	2	7	0	:		
	Hemsby	3	26	0	:		
	Langley ^c	3	4	0	:		
		62	139	142	146 :	4%	78%
	Suffolk*						
ii,379r	1 Hoxne	9	28	0	:		
	3 Homersfield	5	12	0	:		
	2 Yaxley/Thrandeston	1	0	20	:		
		15	40	20	41 :	1%	22%
	Total N. Elmham^j	77	179	162	187		
ROCHESTER	Kent*						
5v	Southfleet	6	11	0	:		
	Stone	6	13	0	:		
	Fawkham	2	7	0	:		
	Longfield	1	0	70	:		
	Bromley	6	12	10	:		
	Wouldham	6	8	0	:		
	Malling	3	0	40	:		
	Trottscliffe	3	0	60	:		
	Snodland	6	6	0	:		

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
ROCHESTER (cont.)	Cuxton	3	4	10	:		
	Denton	2	0	100	:		
	Halling	6	7	0	:		
	Frindsbury	10	8	0	:		
	Borstall	2	6	0	:		
	Total Rochester^k	62	82	290	97	:	2% 100%
SELSEY 16v–17r	Sussex*						
	Bishopstone	25	26	0	:		
	Henfield	15	10	0	:		
	Aldingbourne	36	15	0	:		
	Ferring	12	7	0	:		
	Amberley	24	20	0	:		
	Sidlesham	12	10	0	:		
	Selsey	10	12	0	:		
	East Wittering	14	8	0	:		
	Preston	20	18	0	:		
	18r Bexhill	20	20	0	:		
	Total Selsey	188	146	0	146	:	5% 100%
SHERBORNE 75v–77r	Dorset*						
	Charminster	10	16	0	:		
	Alton Pancras	6	13	0	:		
	Up Cerne	3	10	0	:		
	Yetminster ^c	15	22	0	:		
	Osborne	5	4	0	:		
	Thornford	7	0	100	:		
	Bradford Abbas	10	10	0	:		
	Compton	6	6	0	:		
	Stalbridge	20	12	0	:		
	Weston	8	7	0	:		
	Corscombe	10	7	0	:		
	Stoke Abbot	7	6	0	:		
	Beaminster	16	16	0	:		
	Netherbury	20	16	0	:		
	Chardstock (Devon)	12	16	0	:		
		154	161	100	166	:	5% 39%
	Berkshire*						
	58r Sonning	60	50	0	50	:	2% 11%
	Wiltshire*						
	66r Potterne	52	60	0	:		
	Bishop's Cannings	70	60	0	:		
	Ramsbury	90	52	15	:		
	Salisbury	50	47	0	:		
		262	219	15	220	:	5% 50%
	Total Sherborne^l	476	430	115	436		

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
WELLS	Somerset*						
	Wells	50	30	0	:		
	Kingsbury Episcopi	20	12	0	:		
	Chard	8	16	0	:		
	'Litnes'	2	0	40	:		
	Wiveliscombe	15	10	0	:		
	Wellington	14	25	0	:		
	Bishop's Lydeard	10	13	0	:		
	Evercreech	20	10	0	:		
	Westbury	6	8	0	:		
	Chew Magna	30	30	0	:		
	Wedmore	10	20	0	:		
	Wamstrow	4	3	0	:		
	Ash Priors	3	3	0	:		
	Total Wells^m	192	180	40	182	:	4% 100%
WINCHESTER	Hampshire*						
<i>bishop's lands:</i>	Old Alresford ^c	51	40	0	:		
40r-43r	Kilmeston ^c	5	0	100	:		
	Twyford	20	20	0	:		
	Twyford ^c	10	12	0	:		
	Easton ^c	6	24	0	:		
	Bishopstoke	5	6	0	:		
	Kilmeston ^c	5	0	100	:		
	Crawley ^c	7	35	0	:		
	Bishop's Waltham ^c	20	31	0	:		
	Overton	41	24	0	:		
	West Meon	20	20	0	:		
	Meonstoke	1	0	25	:		
	East Meon	6	4	0	:		
	(?) Stoke ^c	10	10	0	:		
	Fareham ^c	30	18	0	:		
	'Chingescamp' ^c	1	0	15	:		
	Yavington	2	0	25	:		
	Chilton Candover ^c	10	8	0	:		
	Houghton ^c	24	24	0	:		
	Wield ^c	10	8	0	:		
	West Tisted	7	4	0	:		
	Abbotstone	9	0	100	:		
	Bentley	10	12	0	:		
46v	Otterbourne ^c	4	8	0	:		
<i>monks' lands:</i>	Chilcomb ^c	1	73	10	:		
	Nursling	5	8	0	:		
	Chilbolton ^c	10	12	0	:		
	Avington	5	6	0	:		
	Whitchurch ^c	50	30	0	:		
	Hurstbourne Priors ^c	38	36	0	:		
	Highclere	10	12	0	:		
	Crondall ^c	50	15	10	:		
	Droxford ^c	16	26	0	:		
	Polhampton	5	8	0	:		

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
WINCHESTER (cont.)	Exton ^c	12	16	0	:		
	Alverstoke ^c	16	6	0	:		
	Martyr Worthy	3	8	0	:		
	Wonston	10	8	0	:		
	Branbury ^c	4	0	100	:		
	South Stoneham	5	7	0	:		
	Millbrook ^c	5	0	100	:		
	Hinton Ampner	8	8	0	:		
	Fawley	2	0	60	:		
	Ecchinswell	10	7	0	:		
	Hannington	7	0	100	:		
	Hoddington	5	4	0	:		
	Boarhunt	1	0	6	:		
	Wooton St Lawrence	20	15	0	:		
	Hayling	5	0	100	:		
	Brockhampton	6	0	100	:		
	Havant	10	8	0	:		
	51r Througham (NF)	3	0	60	:		
	52v Sclive (NF)	3	10	0	:		
	Calbourne ^c (IoW)	32	16	0	:		
		669	647	1,011	698 :	20%	59%
	Surrey*						
31r	Farnham	60	55	0	55 :	4%	5%
58r	Berkshire						
	Woolstone	20	16	0	:		
	Harwell	15	12	0	:		
	Brightwell-cum-Sotwell	20	20	0	:		
		55	48	0	48 :	2%	4%
<i>bishop's lands:</i>	Wiltshire						
	Downton ^c	97	60	0	:		
	Fonthill Bishop	10	10	0	:		
	Fyfield ^c	5	0	100	:		
<i>monks' lands:</i>	Alton Priors	20	24	0	:		
	Ham ^c	11	6	0	:		
	Westwood	3	6	0	:		
	'Elingdon'	30	14	0	:		
	Bushton	10	3	0	:		
	Wanborough	19	15	0	:		
	Enford ^c	30	34	0	:		
	'East Overton' ^c	15	8	0	:		
	Stockton ^c	10	8	0	:		
		260	188	100	193 :	4%	16%
87v	Somerset						
	Taunton	54	50	0	:		
	Pitminster	15	13	0	:		
	Bleadon	15	15	0	:		
	Rimpton	5	7	0	:		
		89	85	0	85 :	2%	7%

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
WINCHESTER (cont.)	Hertfordshire						
133r	Cottered	5	6	0	6 :	0%	1%
	Buckinghamshire						
143v	West Wycombe	19	12	0	:		
	Ivinghoe	20	15	0	:		
		39	27	0	27 :	1%	2%
	Oxfordshire						
155r	Witney	30	22	0	:		
	Adderbury	15	12	0	:		
		45	34	0	34 :	1%	3%
	Cambridgeshire						
190r	Steeple Morden	8	16	0	:		
	'Clopton'	4	4	0	:		
	Abington	3	8	0	:		
	Bassingbourn	1	0	60	:		
		16	28	60	31 :	2%	3%
	Total Winchester	1,236	1,118	1,171	1,177		
WORCESTER	Worcestershire*						
172v–174r	Kempsey ^c	24	16	0	:		
	Wick Episcopi ^c	15	8	0	:		
	Fladbury ^c	40	10	0	:		
	Bredon ^c	35	10	0	:		
	Ripple with Upton ^c	35	10	0	:		
	Blockley ^c	38	16	0	:		
	Tredinton & Tidmington ^c	23	10	0	:		
	Northwick ^c	25	13	0	:		
	Daylesford ^c	3	3	0	:		
	Evenlode ^c	5	3	0	:		
	Overbury with Pendock	6	6	0	:		
	Sedgeberrow	4	3	0	:		
	Shipston	2	0	50	:		
	Harvington	3	0	50	:		
	Grimley	3	3	0	:		
	Hallow with Broadwas	7	0	100	:		
	Crophorne & Netherton ^c	50	7	0	:		
	Hartlebury	20	16	0	:		
	Hanbury	14	7	0	:		
	Alvechurch et al.	13	0	100	:		
	Cleeve with Atch Lench	11	7	0	:		
	Phepson	6	0	10	:		
	Stoke Priors et al.	10	0	40	:		
	Wolverley	5	4	0	:		
	Eardiston and Knighton	15	8	0	:		
		412	160	350	178 :	18%	54%

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
WORCESTER (cont.)	Gloucestershire*						
164v–165r	Westbury-on-Trym	50	24	0	:		
	Colesbourne ^c	8	8	0	:		
	Bibury with Eycot	22	18	0	:		
	Withington	30	38	0	:		
	Condicote ^c	2	0	40	:		
	Bishop's Cleeve ^c	30	36	0	:		
		142	124	40	126	4%	38%
238v	Warwickshire*						
	Hampton Lucy	12	4	0	:		
	Alveston	15	8	0	:		
	Loxley	1	1	0	:		
	Stratford-on-Avon	15	0	100	:		
	Spelsbury	10	10	0	:		
	Flecknoe	2	0	10	:		
		55	23	110	29	2%	8%
	Total Worcesterⁿ	608	307	500	332		
YORK	Yorkshire*						
302v–304v	Patrington+	36	30	0	:		
	Swine+	10	5	0	:		
	Sherburn in Elmet	96	34	6	:		
	York	15	8	0	:		
	Elloughton and Wauldby	17	7	0	:		
	Walkington	8	2	0	:		
	Newbald	28	24	0	:		
	Ricall	2	5	0	:		
	Everyingham	17	14	0	:		
	Wetwang	14	4	0	:		
	Bishop Wilton+	30	14	0	:		
	Grindale	4	2	0	:		
	Barmby Moor/Millington	10	5	0	:		
	Low Caythorpe	4	1	0	:		
	Weaverthorpe+	18	14	0	:		
	High Bethorpe+	14	2	0	:		
	Marton	3	0	10	:		
	Stillington	10	2	0	:		
	Haxby	6	1	0	:		
	Tollerton/Alne	16	3	0	:		
	Helperby ^c	5	0	10	:		
	Warmfield	9	7	0	:		
	Upper Poppleton	8	2	0	:		
	Acomb	15	0	30	:		
	Otley+	60	10	0	:		
	Grafton	3	0	10	:		
	Ulleskelf+	13	5	0	:		
	Ripon	43	32	0	:		
	Copt Hewick	2	0	5	:		
	Great Givendale/Skelton	19	12	0	:		

Appendix

Bishopric	Holdings by County	hides/ carucates/ sulungs	£	s.	total value	(a)	(b)
YORK (cont.)	Howgrave+	5	1	0	:		
<i>minster lands:</i>	Beverley	1	44	0	:		
	South Dalton	12	4	0	:		
	Lockington	3	0	10	:		
	Etton	8	0	10	:		
	'Raventhorpe'	3	0	10	:		
	Middleton-on-wolds	5	2	0	:		
	Garton-on-wolds	9	0	45	:		
	Bentley	2	1	0	:		
		581	294	101	299 :	28%	81%
	Leicestershire						
230v	Tur Langton	13	0	0	0 :	0%	0%
	Nottinghamshire*						
283r	Southwell	23	40	0	:		
	Cropwell Bishop	3	3	0	:		
	Laneham	9	9	0	:		
	Sutton	1	8	0	:		
	Calverton	0	2	0	:		
	Norwell	0	6	0	:		
	S. Muskham	4	0	16	:		
		39	68	16	69 :	9%	19%
	Total York^o	633	362	117	368		

Estates are listed in the order in which they appear in Domesday Book; values calculated to the shilling and rounded () Denotes diocesan counties; cathedral counties in bold*

- (a) Percentage of county, by value, held by the bishopric based on Darby, *Domesday England*, Appendix 12). Darby only gives TRW figures, so the percentage is only a rough estimate.
- (b) Percentage of the bishopric's total value contributed by its holdings in that county
- (c) Total value is comprised of some combination of demesne and leased lands
- (d) Canterbury lands alienated before the Conquest, valued at approximately £270, include Sundridge, Langport, Saltwood, Orpington, and Folkestone in Kent; Haddenham and Halton in Buckinghamshire; and Harrow in Middlesex, not included. Teynham is not included in DB, but because it appears in DM, it is included here.
- (e) Durham's lands are drastically undervalued because the county of Durham is not included in the survey.
- (f) Lands held by Leofric and donated TRW not included: Dawlish and Holcombe in Devonshire and Bampton in Oxfordshire.
- (g) Lands held by Earl Harold and lands that were waste: at least £40
- (h) Lichfield also controlled some portion of St Chad's, Shrewsbury's lands (£2), but not clear how much so not included.
- (i) The lands of the canons are separated by eight tenants-in-chief, suggesting they held them directly from the king.
- (j) Bishop Æthelmær also had some interest in Holkham worth 5s. Hemsby (£26) not included because a TRW acquisition.
- (k) Earl Godwine bought Stoke (£8) illegally from two men who held it of the bishop; not included.
- (l) Sherborne not included because it was in Queen Edith's hands TRE (£50).
- (m) No TRE values recorded so TRW demesne values used. Combe St Nicholas and Litton were probably TRW purchases.
- (n) Hemming's Cartulary lists more than 30 holdings lost by the see from leases and outright predation.

Appendix

Assuming the compiler was correct in many cases, Worcester's TRE patrimony is substantially undervalued.

(o) Ealdred's separate lands in Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Hampshire and Devonshire are not included. Approximately carucates in North Cave, Wykeham Hill, East Newton, Strensall, Towthorpe, Earswick, 'Coburn,' Risby, Kipling and Lowthorpe were recorded as waste TRE, therefore not included.

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Index

- Abbo of Fleury, 85 n. 99
 Abingdon, abbey of, 25, 94 n. 148, 96, 169
 Adalbert, archbishop of Bremen, 47–8
 Adderbury (Oxon.), 129 n. 28, 142 n. 103
Admonitio Generalis, 102
 Ælflæd, 129 n. 30
 Ælflæd, queen of England, 164
 Ælfgar, 129 n. 30, 162
 Ælfgar, bishop of Ramsbury, 67
 Ælfgar, earl of Mercia, 146–7, 149
 Ælgifu, 160, 174
 Ælfheah, archbishop of Canterbury, 10, 63, 116, 145, 148 n. 137
 Ælfheah, bishop of Winchester, 62, 107
 Ælfheah, ealdorman of Hampshire, 160, 172, 187
 Ælfhun, bishop of London, 63
 Ælfketil, 162
 Ælfnoth, 147
 Ælfred, ealdorman of ?Surrey, 166
 Ælfric Bata, 165
 Ælfric Modercope, 172, 188
 Ælfric, abbot of Eynsham, 35, 37, 51, 76, 108, 109, 114 n. 117, 123
 and bishops, 40
 and reform, 76
 Catholic Homilies, 60, 76, 92, 101, 110–11, 112, 117, 197
 Colloquy, 83, 117
 De temporibus anni, 84
 Excerptiones Pseudo-Egberti, 102
 Grammar, 84
 Lives of the Saints, 84, 111
 on clerical celibacy, 120
 on penance, 113, 155
 on tithes and alms, 158
 Pastoral Letters, 75, 78, 117, 119, 120
 sources, 44, 73, 76, 111
 Ælfric, archbishop of Canterbury, 148, 172, 174, 187
 Ælfric, archbishop of York, 64, 78
 Ælfric, bishop of North Elmham, 148, 172, 188
 Ælfric, ealdorman, 170
 Ælfric, son of Æscwyn, 177, 178
 Ælfsige, bishop of Winchester, 148
 Ælfstan, bishop of London, 172
 Ælfstan, bishop of Rochester, 63, 145, 172–3
 Ælfswith, 160
 Ælfswith, wife of Brihtric, 166–7, 178
 Ælfthryth, queen of England, 160, 170, 183
 Ælfweard, bishop of London, 171
 Ælfwig, bishop of London, 63
 Ælfwold, 162
 Ælfwold, bishop of Crediton, 67, 148, 188, 189
 Æscwig, bishop of Dorchester, 67, 170
 Æscwig, bishop of London, 107
 Æscwyn, 177
 Æthelbald, king of Wessex, 167
 Æthelberht, king of Kent, 167
 Æthelflæd, lady of the Mercians, 161
 Æthelheard, king of Wessex, 129, 141 n. 94
 Æthelmær, bishop of North Elmham, 149–50, 189, 192
 Æthelmær, ealdorman of Hampshire, 166
 Æthelnoth, archbishop of Canterbury, 54, 148 n. 137, 176, 184 n. 186
 Æthelred, earl of Mercia, 161
 Æthelred, king of England, 106, 145, 160, 168 n. 81, 170
 and Vikings, 62–3
 council of 1008, 57
 laws of, 56–8, 113, 118–19
 penitential edict, 57–8
 Æthelric of Bocking, 129 n. 30, 145 n. 121, 159, 162, 172
 Æthelric, bishop of Durham, 103 n. 36, 107
 Æthelric, bishop of Selsey, 172, 192
 Æthelric, bishop of Sherborne, 187
 Æthelsige, abbot of Evesham, 116
 Æthelsige, bishop of Sherborne, 63, 170
 Æthelstan, atheling, 129, 159, 160, 164 n. 51
 Æthelstan, bishop of Hereford, 122, 170
 Æthelstan, king of England, 55–6, 129, 138, 144, 162, 163, 164–5, 183, 186 n. 194
 Æthelwealh, king of Sussex, 136
 Æthelweard, 147, 162
 Æthelwig, abbot of Evesham, 103 n. 137, 175, 176, 183
 Æthelwine, bishop of Durham, 63
 Æthelwine, ealdorman of East Anglia, 107
 Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester, 77–8, 104, 160, 164, 165, 199
 and church property, 142 n. 100, 174–5, 183, 188
 and education, 83, 86, 92
 and laws of Edgar, 56
 and reform, 3, 79, 82, 95–6
 as bishop, 46, 67, 110, 115, 172
 as tutor and royal advisor, 49–50, 52, 61
 church dedications, 106
 early life, 49

Index

- Æthelwold, bishop (cont.)
 in images, 52
 reputation, 22
 manuscripts, 94
 Æthelwold, ealdorman, 129 n. 30
 Æthelwulf, king of Wessex, 128
 Alcuin, 84, 88
 Aldhelm, 86, 88, 89, 92–3
 Aldingbourne (Sussex), 136 n. 60
 Aldrith, king of Northumbria, 165
 Alfred, king of England, 141, 153, 161
 laws of, 56, 109
 political theology, 50–1
 reform program, 42–4, 86, 88, 94
 translations, 42–4
 Alresford (Hants.), 132, 142 n. 99, 154
 Alsige, 147
 Alton Pancras (Dorset), 133 n. 48, 154
 Alton Priors (Wilts.), 132 n. 41, 161
 Alvechurch (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Alverstoke (Hants.), 142 n. 102, 154
 Amalarius of Metz, 90, 95, 103
 Ambrose, 87
 Amounderness (Lancs.), 138, 145
 Anand, 149
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 1, 3, 8, 9, 12–13, 20, 21,
 24, 35, 54, 55, 59, 65, 87, 179
 Ansgar the Staller, 127
 antiphons and antiphoners, 77, 78, 103, 114
 Arator, 90
 archdeacons, 99, 120, 122, 193 n. 11, 197–8
 Ash Priors (Som.), 143 n. 108
 Ashingdon, church of, 106
 Augustine, Saint, 86–7
 Avington (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 Axminster (Yorks.), 138 n. 73
 Aylesbury (Bucks.), 184
 Aylton (Hereford), 170
 Badanoth Beotting, 172
 Bampton (Oxon.), 149 n. 138
 Banbury (Oxon.), 136 n. 61
 Banwell (Som.), 145 n. 111
 Barling (Essex), 145 n. 121
 Barnes (Surrey), 128, 129 n. 27
 Bath, abbey of, 94 n. 148
 Batsford (Glos.), 134 n. 53
 Battle of Maldon, 48–9
 Beaminster (Dorset), 133 n. 47, 48, 154
 Beauchamp St Paul's (Mddx.), 138 n. 72
 Beddington (Surrey), 142 n. 99
 Bede, 110
 on bishops, 44
 works, 9, 18, 45, 68, 85, 86, 87, 88, 94 n. 148,
 97, 165
 Bighton (Norfolk), 149 n. 143
 Benedict Biscop, 165
 Benedictine Reform, 5, 76, 79, 123, 138
Benedictional of St Æthelwold, 38, 45, 46, 52,
 105, 110
 benedictionals, 89, 100, 109
 beneficial hidation, 153–4
 Bentley (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 Beorhtmær of Gracechurch, 153, 155
 Beorhttric, 145 n. 121
 Beverley, minster, 154, 182, 184
 Bexhill (Sussex), 136 n. 60
 Bible, 77–8
 Bibury (Glos.), 134 n. 52, 53
 Billingham (Durham), 148 n. 132
 Birling (Kent), 178
 Bishop Wearmouth (Durham), 138
 Bishop's Cleeve (Glos.), 134 n. 54
 Bishop's Lydeard (Som.), 143 n. 108
 Bishop's Waltham (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 bishops,
 acting on behalf of laity, 172–4
 and courts, 169–72
 and law-codes, 55–9
 and royal consecration, 50–5
 and the Norman Conquest, *epilogue*
 and warfare, 35–6, 186–8
 Anglo-Norman, *epilogue*
 as administrators, 121–2
 as litigants, 174–8
 as patrons, 147–50
 as royal servants, 62–7
 education of, 49–50
 in the *witan*, 59–67
 lordships of, 188–9
 monastic, 44–7
 rights and dues acquired, 181–6
 rights reserved to, 99–109, 113–45
 supervision and administration of clergy,
 101–3, 116–21
 urban interests of, 180–6
 values of, 42–9
 Bishopstoke (Hants.), 132 n. 41
 Bishopstone (Sussex), 136 n. 60
 Bleadon (Som.), 129 n. 28, 142 n. 102
 Blockley (Worcs.), 134 n. 52, 54
 Blofield (Norfolk), 149
 Bocking (Essex), 129 n. 30
 Boethius, 43–4, 84, 88
 Bondi, 127
 Borstall (Kent), 133 n. 45
 Bosham, church of (Sussex), 149
 Bradford (Berks.), 170
 Bradford Abbas (Dorset), 133 n. 48, 134 n. 50
 Branscombe (Devon.), 143 n. 113, 149 n. 138
 Bredon (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Bridport (Dorset), 152 n. 155
 'Brightston' (Devon.), 143 n. 113, 149 n. 138
 Brightwell-cum-Sotwell (Berks.), 128, 132 n. 41,
 141 n. 96
 Brihtric Grim, 129 n. 30
 Brihtric, 166, 173, 177–8
 Brihtwaru, wife of Ælfric, 177–8
 Bristol (Glos.), 152 n. 155
 Britheah, bishop of Worcester, 63
 Brockdish (Norfolk), 184
 Bromley (Kent), 177, 178
 Brompton (Yorks.), 138 n. 73

Index

- Burton, abbey of, 174
 Bury (Devon.), 149 n. 138
 Bury St Edmunds, abbey of, 148, 160, 161, 170, 173
 Byrhtferth of Ramsey, 85, 92
 Byrthnoth, 129 n. 30
 Caelius Sedulius, 85, 90
 Calbourne (Isle of Wight), 132 n. 41
 Calne (Wilts.), 152 n. 155
 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 190, 117
 Candover (Hants.), 167
 canon law, 102–3, 116, 118, 119, 120
Canons of Edgar see Wulfstan II, archbishop of York
 Canterbury (Kent), 151
 Canterbury, Christ Church, see of, 3, 122, 164, 165, 166, 167, 170, 172, 185, 187
 and hagiography, 17
 cartulary, 146–7
 community, 79
 conversion, 71, 80
 estates, 128–9, 130, 131–2, 138, 139–41, 145, 146–7, 148, 154, 159, 162, 176–7, 179, 182, 188
 fire at, 195
 jurisdiction of, 98–9
 liberties of, 169, 183, 184
 liturgy, 114
 manuscripts, 73, 77, 85, 86, 89, 90, 93, 100
 post-Conquest cathedral, 194
 urban interests, 151–2, 153, 180, 181
 value of endowment, 125, 126, 130, 132
 Canterbury, St Augustine's, abbey of, 86 n. 102, 89, 90, 94, 95, 109
 Carham (Northumb.), 137 n. 66
 Carlisle, 137 n. 66
 Carolingian Church, 42, 50, 76
 Cartmell (Cumbria), 137 n. 66
 Cassian, 90
 Cassiodorus, 87
 Cenwald, bishop of Worcester, 63
 Cenwalh, king of Wessex, 134 n. 49
 Ceolwin, 161
 Ceowulf, king of Wessex, 137
 Chardstock (Devon), 133 n. 48
 Charminster (Dorset), 133 n. 47, 154
 charters, 1, 8, 9, 10, 16, 34, 46, 53, 60, 61, 62, 63, 78, 121, 122, 124, 128, 129, 132, 133, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 146, 148, 150, 152, 153, 154, 159, 160, 161, 163, 168, 169, 170, 174, 175, 183, 188
 Chartham (Kent), 140 n. 87
 Cheam (Surrey), 129 n. 29
 Cheddar (Som.), 145 n. 111
 Chertsey, abbey of, 171
 Chester St John, church of, 80
 Chester St Werburgh's, church of, 80
 Chester, 130, 152 n. 156, 171, 180, 187
 Chew Magna (Som.), 143
 Chich (Essex), 145 n. 118
 Chichester (Sussex), 151 n. 153, 152 n. 158
 Chilbolton (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 Chilcomb (Hants.), 132, 141, 154
 Chilton Candover (Hants.), 145 n. 119
 Chingford (Essex), 138 n. 73
 Cholsey (Berks.), 141 n. 96
chorepiscopi, 121–2, 141 n. 94, 143 n. 106
 chrism, 108, 116, 120
 Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, 44–5, 72, 73, 76–7, 81, 90, 100
 church-scot, 157
 Cicero, 84, 85
 Clacton (Essex), 133 n. 43
 Cluny, abbey of, 178
 Cnut, king of England, 1, 169, 170
 as Christian king, 53–4, 164
 crown to Christ Church, 163
 gifts to episcopal sees, 129, 138 n. 73, 140, 143, 145, 164, 165, 167
 laws of, 57, 58–9, 113, 115
Codex Wintoniensis, 141 n. 91
 Colchester (Essex), 152 n. 158, 181, 194
 Colesbourne (Glos.), 134 n. 54
 Colkirk (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
 collectars, 74, 75, 91, 95
 Compton (Dorset), 133 n. 48
 Congresbury (Som.), 145 n. 111
 Cookham (Berks.), 132 n. 39, 139
 Coomb (Hants.), 142 n. 103
 Copford (Essex), 145 n. 121
 Copsig, 107
 Copt Hewick (Yorks.), 136 n. 62
 Corbie, abbey of, 96
 Cornwall, see of, 143
 Corscombe (Devon.), 188
 Council of Hertford, 142
 Council of Winchester, 95
 courts, borough, 169, 170–1
 courts, shire, 169–71
 Coventry, abbey of, 80, 150 n. 149, 179
 Crawley (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 Crayke (Yorks.), 137 n. 66
 Crediton (Devon.), 143, 183, 186 n. 194, 194
 Crediton, see of, 90, 102, 122, 143, 148
 Cressingham, Great (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
 Cricklade (Wilts.), 152 n. 155
 Crondall (Hants.), 142 n. 102, 148 n. 135
 Cropredy (Oxon.), 136 n. 61
 Cropthorne & Netherton (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Croydon (Surrey), 128
 Culmstock (Devon.), 143 n. 113, 149 n. 138
 Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, 109
 Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne, 88, 164
 Cuxton (Kent), 133 n. 45
 Cynewulf, king of Wessex, 139
 Cynsige, archbishop of York, 63, 65, 106
 Darenth (Kent), 140 n. 86, 145 n. 120, 121, 178
 Darley, Red Book of, 93, 102
 Darlington (Durham), 147 n. 129
 Dartford (Kent), 155 n. 176
 Datchet (Bucks.), 170
 Dawlish (Devon.), 149 n. 138

Index

- deacons, 105
 deans, 197–8
 Deerhurst, church at, 107
 Defensor, 88–9
 Denton (Kent), 146 n. 121, 178
Directions for a Confessor, 115
Disticha Catonis, 86
 Divine Office, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 81–2, 85, 161
 Domesday Book, 1, 4, 8, 16, 79, 122, 124, 125,
 126, 137, 143, 145, 146, 147, 149, 151, 152,
 153, 154, 169, 180, 181, 182, 184, 185, 187,
 188
 Dorchester (Dorset), 152 n. 155
 Dorchester (Oxon.), 136 n. 61, 152 n. 155
 Dorchester, see of, 2, 174, 184
 diocese, 99, 116, 126, 130
 estates, 136, 137, 147, 154, 182
 manuscripts, 90
 move to Lincoln, 194
 urban interests, 152, 181
 value of endowment, 127, 130
 Downton (Wilts.), 128, 132, 141
 Droitwich (Worcs.), 134 n. 53
 Droxford (Hants.), 132 n. 41
 Duduc, bishop of Wells, 96, 143–4, 149
 Dunmow (Essex), 148 n. 135
 Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, 171
 and reform, 95–6
 as (arch)bishop, 46, 61, 107, 173
 as royal advisor, 52, 63
 commemoration of, 10, 88, 195
 early life of, 46
 in images, 52
 the poet, 86
 Durham, 152
 Durham Collectar, 74
 Durham, see of, 17, 163, 165, 166, 189
 community at, 74
 estates, 137, 138, 147
 Liber Vitae, 10, 146 n. 126
 manuscripts, 86, 89, 91, 103, 164
 problems valuing, 125
 urban interests, 152, 181
 Eadmer of Canterbury, 171, 175
 and Anglo-Saxons, 20
 and Canterbury, 79
 as source, 21, 34
 hagiography, 10
 Historia Novarum, 18
 Eadnoth, bishop of Dorchester, 67
 Eadred, king of England, 164, 167
 Eadric Streona, ealdorman of Mercia, 188
 Eadric the Steersman, 186
 Eadric, 162
 Eadsige, archbishop of Canterbury, 121, 148 n.
 137, 170
 Eadulf, bishop of Cornwall, 183
 Eadwig, king of England, 63, 138, 142 n. 99
 Ealdred, archbishop of York, 116, 121–2
 and liturgy, 54, 95
 and Worcester, 23, 175
 as (arch)bishop, 64–6, 96, 103 n. 36 and 37,
 107, 116
 consecrates Harold, 54
 post-Conquest reputation, 22–3
 problems with the papacy, 23, 99
 reform of minsters, 78–9, 106
 Eardiston and Knighton (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Easter, 109, 115, 119, 157
 Easton (Hants.), 132 n. 41
 Ecchinswell (Hants.), 145 n. 119
 Ecgrid, bishop of Lindisfarne, 147 n. 132
 Ecgrith, king of Northumbria, 137
 Egbert Pontifical, 104
 Edgar, king of England, 169, 183, 186
 coronation, 51–3
 gifts to episcopal sees, 129, 138, 164, 167
 images of, 52, 53
 laws of, 56, 158
 role in reform, 52–3, 164
 Edith, queen of England, 62, 106, 134, 143 n. 111,
 166, 179
 Edlingham (Northumb.), 137 n. 67
 Edmund, king of England, 56, 63, 163
 Edward the Confessor, 106
 appointments of, 19–25
 consecration of, 54
 gifts to sees, 129, 138 n. 73, 143, n. 111, 149,
 153, 154, 181, 185
 lands of, 125, 127
 relations with bishops, 62
 Edward the Elder, king of England, 142, 143
 Edward, atheling, 168 n. 81
 Edwin, 161, 170
 Edwin, earl, 177
 Eglingham (Northumb.), 137 n. 65, 67
 ‘Elingdon’ (Wilts.), 145 n. 119
 Elmham, North (Norfolk), 143
 Elmham, North, see of, 174, 184
 diocese, 99
 estates, 130, 143, 144
 library, 2, 91
 move to Thetford, 194 n. 119
 urban interests, 152
 value of endowment, 127
 Ely, abbey of, 106, 127, 169
 Ember Days, 109
 Emma, queen of England, 129, 164, 165, 166, 171
Encomium Emmae Reginae, 48
 Enford (Wilts.), 129 n. 27, 142 n. 102
 Enham (Hants.), 118
 Everyingham (Yorks.), 136 n. 62
 Evesham, abbey of, 17, 175
Excerptiones Pseudo-Egberti (see Ælfric)
 Exeter, 152 n. 158
 Exeter, see of, 122, 163
 communal life at, 74, 78, 79
 estates, 130, 143, 144, 179
 move to Exeter, 62
 manuscripts, 68, 72, 74, 86, 87, 89–91, 93, 101,
 111, 117
 urban interests, 152

Index

- value of endowment, 127
- Eynsham (Oxon.), 132 n. 39, 139
- Fareham (Hants.), 142 n. 102, 154
- Farndon (Ches.), 135 n. 57
- Farnham (Surrey), 132 n. 39
- Fawkham (Kent), 177, 178
- Fécamp, abbey of, 195, 196
- Ferring (Sussex), 136 n. 60
- Fladbury (Worcs.), 134 n. 53
- Fleury, abbey of, 95
- florilegia*, 88–9
- Folcard of St Bertin, 96
- Folkestone (Kent), 140 n. 86, 140 n. 90
- Fonthill Bishop (Wilts.), 145 n. 119
- forfeitures, 180, 182, 183
- Forthere, bishop of Sherborne, 141 n. 94
- Frindsbury (Kent), 133 n. 45
- Frithegod, 86, 96
- Frythugyth, queen of Wessex, 129
- Fulham (Mddx.), 133 n. 43, 187
- Fyfield (Wilts.), 145 n. 119
- fyrð*-service, 186–7
- Gainford (Durham), 148 n. 132
- Garrington (Kent), 140 n. 87
- Gaywood (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
- Gerbald of Liège, 102
- Gervin, abbot of Saint-Riquier, 165
- Ghent, abbey of, 95
- Gilling (Yorks.), 137 n. 66
- Giso, bishop of Wells,
 - lands given and recovered, 143–4, 175
 - reform of community, 78, 79
 - reputation, 24
- Glastonbury, abbey of, 17, 90, 107, 127, 169, 175, 196
- glosses, 92–3
- Gloucester (Glos.), 152 n. 155
- Gloucester, abbey of, 106
- Goda, countess, 166
- Godgifu, countess, 166
- Godgifu, wife of Leofwine, 174
- Godwine, 147
- Godwine, Earl of Wessex
 - and episcopal property, 140 n. 90, 179
 - death and burial, 9, 168 n. 81
 - exiled, 65–6
 - generosity of, 166
 - wealth of, 9, 125, 127
- Goscelin of St Bertin, 96, 196
- Gregorian Reform, 156, 198
- Gregory the Great, 44, 88, 90
 - Dialogi*, 43, 88
 - homilies, 88
 - Moralia in Job*, 88
 - Pastoral Care*, 4, 42–3, 77, 87, 88, 90, 197
- Grimley (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
- Gundulf, bishop of Rochester, 194
- Guthred, king of Northumbria, 137, 168 n. 81
- Gyrth Godwineson, earl of East Anglia, 179
- Haddenham (Bucks.), 140 n. 90
- Hadleigh (Suffolk), 129 n. 30
- Hagbourne (Berks.), 170
- Halling (Kent), 133 n. 45
- Hallow with Broadwas (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
- Halstock (Dorset), 133, 133 n. 48
- Halton (Bucks.), 140 n. 90, 176
- Ham (Wilts.), 129 n. 30, 145 n. 119, 167
- Hampnett (Glos.), 153
- Hampton Lucy (War.), 134 n. 54
- Hanbury (Worcs.), 134 n. 52, 53, 54
- Hannington (Hants.), 145 n. 119
- Harling (Norfolk), 188
- Harold Harefoot, king of England, 54, 140, 182 n. 169
- Harold II Godwineson, king of England, 65, 116, 170, 188
 - and Waltham Holy Cross, 79, 106–7
 - appropriation of church property, 135 and n. 58, 179
 - reputation, 13, 18–19
- Harrow (Mddx.), 129, 140 n. 90
- Harthcnut, king of England, 63–4, 167 n. 78
- Hartlebury (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
- Harvington (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
- Harwell (Berks.), 129, 145 n. 119
- Hastings, battle of, 19, 179, 191, 193 n. 12
- Havant (Hants.), 142 n. 102
- Hayes (Mddx.), 129, 132,
- Hayling (Hants.), 142 n. 103
- Helmington (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
- Helperby (Yorks.), 136 n. 62, 170
- Helperic, 85 n. 95
- Hemming's Cartulary, 17, 175, 176, 179, 186
- Hemsby (Norfolk), 149
- Henfield (Sussex), 136 n. 60
- Henry of Huntingdon,
 - and Anglo-Saxon bishops, 17–25, 32
 - and contemporary Church, 25, 29–31
 - sources, 21
 - uses of history, 13–14
- Herbert Losinga, bishop of Norwich, 196
- Hereford, 152 n. 156
- Hereford, see of, 170, 183, 185, 187
 - diocese, 99
 - estates, 130, 135–6
 - life at, 79, 80
 - urban interests, 152
- heriot, 67, 188
- Herman, bishop of Ramsbury, 24, 62, 64, 91, 179, 188, 194
- Heybridge (Essex), 138 n. 73
- Highclere (Hants.), 132 n. 41
- Hinton Ampner (Hants.), 142 n. 102
- Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, 137
- Historiola Somersetensis*, 24
- Hoddington (Hants.), 142 n. 103
- Holcombe (Devon.), 149 n. 138
- Holland (Lincs.), 145 n. 118
- Hollingbourne (Kent), 140 n. 87, 148 n. 136
- homiliaries, 112
- homilies and sermons, 105, 108, 114, 115, 116, 117–18, 120

Index

- anonymous, 112, 117
 Blickling, 88, 92, 110 n. 88
 of Ælfric, 110–11, 117
 of Archbishop Wulfstan, 111–12, 117
 Vercelli, 88, 92 110 n.88
 Horsley, East (Surrey), 129 n. 30, 167
 Houghton (Hants.), 142 n. 102, 152 n. 156
 Hoxne (Suffolk), 143, 148 n. 135, 185
 Hrabanus Maurus, 87
 Hugh Candidus, 115
 hundreds, private, 184
 Huntingdon, 152 n. 155, 181
 Hurstbourne Priors (Hants.), 132 n. 41
 Hyginus, 85
 hymnals, 77
 Hythe (Kent), 179
 Ickham (Kent), 145 n. 120, 162
Instituto Canonico, 102
 Isidore of Seville, 84, 85, 87, 90
 Isle of Wight, 141
 Islington (Mddx.), 133 n. 43
 Israel the Grammarian, 96
 Jedburgh (Scotland), 148 n. 132
 Jerome, 87
 John of Worcester, 12, 21, 34, 37, 54, 61, 62, 64, 122, 192
 John the Evangelist, 110
 John, bishop of Bath and Wells, 26
 Judith, wife of Tostig, 166
 Julianus Pomerius, 44–5
 Juvenius, 85
 Kempsey (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Kensworth (Herts.), 188
 Ketel, 161, 162
 Kilnston (Hants.), 132 n. 41
 Kingsbury Episcopi (Som.), 143
 Kirk Yetholm (Scotland), 137 n. 65
 Knighton and Leire (Hunts.), 134 n. 54
 Koddī, 174
 Lactantius, 85
 Lanalet Pontifical, 105
 Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, 15, 87 n. 112, 173, 193, 198
 and church lands, 172
 builds cathedral, 194
 customs, 9–10, 195
 reputation, 26
 Langley (Norfolk), 149
 Langport (Kent), 140 n. 90
 law-codes, 42, 157–8, 171
 and role of *witan*, 55–9
 and synods, 118
 of Æthelred, 56–8, 113
 of Æthelstan, 55–6
 of Cnut, 57, 58–9, 113, 115, 158
 of Edgar, 56, 158
 of Edmund, 56
 of Ine, 157
 on blood feud, 113
 on treason, 113
 Wulfstan's authorship of, 37
 Lawhitton (Corn.), 143 n. 106
 Leicester, 152, 152 n. 155, 181
 Lent, 109, 115
 Leofchild, 147
 Leofgar, bishop of Hereford, 35–6, 68, 135 n. 58
 Leofgifu, 160
 Leofric Collectar, 74
 Leofric Missal, 90, 114
 Leofric, bishop of Exeter, 199
 and Edward the Confessor, 62
 and lands, 144, 148–9
 manuscripts, 86, 87, 89–91, 114
 moves see to Exeter, 62, 194
 reform of community, 78
 reputation, 24
 Leofric, earl of Mercia, 78, 80, 127, 174, 179
 Leofsige, 188
 Leofstan, 147
 Leofwine, 170
 Leofwine, abbot of Coventry, 150 n. 149
 Leofwine, earl of Mercia, 129, 140 n. 90, 176, 179
 Leofwine, son of Wulfstan, 145 n. 121, 189
 Leominster, church of, 80
 Lewes (Sussex), 151 n. 153, 152 n. 158
Libellus Æthelwoldi, 174–5
Liber Eliensis, 162, 188
 Lichfield, see of, 2, 150 n. 149, 177, 185
 diocese, 99, 126, 130
 dues of, 182
 estates, 130–1, 135
 move to Coventry via Chester, 194 n. 19
 urban interests, 152, 180–1
 value of endowment, 126, 130, 181
Life of St Cuthbert, 164
Life of St Margaret, 117
 light-scot, 157
 Lincoln, 152 n. 155, 181, 194
 Lincoln, see of, 194
 Lindisfarne, 137 n. 65
 literacy, 83
 liturgical rites,
 baptism, 102, 104, 108, 118, 157
 Candlemas, 102, 157
 Chrism Mass, 76, 108, 114
 church and graveyard dedication, 95, 103, 104–7, 107–8
 confirmation, 95, 104, 107, 108, 157
 consecration, episcopal, 52
 consecration, royal, 50, 54, 108
 Easter, 102
 effects of the Conquest on, 9–10
 extreme unction, 102
 Maundy Thursday, 95, 108, 114–15
 ordination, 101, 103, 108
 penance, 113–14, 116, 117, 119
 Rogationtide, 102, 157
 visitation of the sick, 102, 108, 119
 London, 151, 152 n. 158, 153, 155
 London, British Library, Cotton Nero A. i, 117
 London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius A. iii, 117–18

Index

- London, St Paul's, see of,
 diocese, 128, 132
 estates, 128, 129, 130 n. 33, 123–3, 138, 145, 148
 manuscripts, 93
 rule of, 45, 76, 78
 spoliation of, 63
 urban interests, 152
 value of endowment, 127, 133
 Longfield (Kent), 146 n. 121
 Louth (Lincs.), 136 n. 61
 Lydney (Glos.), 130
 Lyfing, archbishop of Canterbury, 148 n. 137
 Lyfing, bishop of Crediton and Worcester, 59, 61–2, 63, 122
 Lyme Regis (Dorset), 133 n. 48, 152 n. 155, 154
 Macrobius, 85
 Madselin, 159, 174
 Malling, South (Sussex), 132
 Malmesbury, abbey of, 89
 Mannig, abbot of Evesham, 103 n. 37
 Mantat the Anchorite, 161
 manuals, 102
 Margaret, queen of Scotland, 165
 markets, episcopal, 184–5
 Marshall (Durham), 149 n. 138
 Martianus Capella, 84, 85
 Martyr Worthy (Hants.), 132 n. 41
 mass, 104, 105, 109–10, 114, 120
 Mathilda, queen of England, 143
Memoriale qualiter, 76
 Meon, West (Hants.), 145 n. 119
 Meonstoke (Hants.), 155 n. 176
 Meopham (Kent), 140 n. 86, 145 n. 120
 Merstham (Surrey), 129 n. 29,
 Methleigh (Cornwall), 185
 Millbrook (Hants.), 142 n. 103
 Milton, Great (Oxon.), 136 n. 61
 Milverton (Som.), 145 n. 111
 Minster-in-Thamet (Kent), 139
 mints, episcopal, 185
 missals, 50 n. 78, 90, 102, 114, 165
 monasticism, 30, 46, 52, 71, 164
 Monks' Eleigh (Suffolk), 129 n. 30, 140 n. 86, 147
 Monks' Risborough (Bucks.), 148 n. 137
 Moredon (Wilts.), 153
 Mortlake (Surrey), 128,
 Mottisfont (Hants.), 154
 music, 84, 85, 96–7, 103
 Netherbury (Dorset), 133 n. 48, 154
 Newbald (Yorks.), 136 n. 62, 145 n. 121
 Newington (Oxon.), 129 n. 29, 140 n. 87
 Newton (Durham), 149 n. 138
 Norham (Durham), 137 n. 65
 Norman Conquest
 impact of, 3, 5–6, 8–11, 15–17, 185, *epilogue*
 in historical writing, 18, 29
Northumbrian Priests' Law, 35, 109, 117, 119–20, 122
 Northwick (Worcs.), 134 n. 52, 54
 Norton (Durham), 149 n. 138
 Norwich (Norfolk), 152 n. 158, 182 n. 170
 Nursling (Hants.), 132 n. 41
 obituary lists, 8, 10, 53–4, 146–7, 162–3
 oblation, 168
 Osborne (Dorset), 134 n. 50
 Oda, archbishop of Canterbury, 10, 62, 86, 122 n. 163, 129, 140, 157 n. 6
 Oddington (Glos.), 153
 Odo, bishop of Bayeux and earl of Kent, 21, 26, 28, 36, 68, 172
 Offa, king of Mercia, 50, 128, 135, 139
Old English Benedictine Office, 74
Old English Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang (OEERC), 99–100, 109, 115, 120, 121, 122
 and education, 83
 and the *Rule* of St Benedict, 76–7
 manuscripts of, 72–3
 use by English canons, 72, 79, 80, 81–2
 Ordbricht, bishop of Selsey, 170
 ordeal, 108–9, 198
 Orderic Vitalis, 176
 and Anglo-Saxon bishops, 17–23, 32
 on contemporary church, 28–9
 consecrations, 54, 55
 sources, 20, 21
 Ordnoth, 167
 Orosius, 94 n. 148
 Orsett (Essex), 138 n. 72
 Osbern Bigge, 151, 167
 Osbern, bishop of Exeter, 149
 Osmund, bishop of Salisbury, 194
 Oswald, archbishop of York, 46, 136 n. 62
 and King Edgar, 52
 as (arch)bishop, 62, 96, 107, 114–15
 consecration of, 52
 early life, 49
 lands, 149, 150
 translation of relics, 106
 Oswaldslow, 182–3, 186, 187
 Oswulf, 161
 Otley (Yorks.), 136 n. 62
 Otterbourne (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 Overbury (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Overton (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 'Overton, East' (Wilts.), 145 n. 119
 Oxford, 152 n. 155, n. 156
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Laud Misc.* 482, 118
 Pagham (Sussex), 129, 140 n. 86
 Patching (Sussex), 129 n. 30
 Patrington (Yorks.), 136 n. 62, 138 n. 73
 Pawton (Corn.), 143 n. 106
 penance, 113–16, 118, 119
 Penenden Heath, 172
 penitentials, 102, 113, 115
 Pentecost, 109, 111
 Persius, 90
 Peterborough, abbey of, 17, 106
 Pitminster (Som.), 129 n. 28, 142 n. 103
 plough-alms, 157
 pluralism, 21, 99

Index

- Plympton, minster of, 143
 poetry, 85–6, 90
 Polhampton (Hants.), 145 n. 119
 Pontifical of St Dunstan, 108
 pontificals, 100–101, 103, 104, 105, 108, 109, 113
 Porphyry, 90
 Portiforium of St Wulfstan, 74, 75
 prayers for the dead, 159–60
 preaching, 110–13
 prebends, 193–4
 Prees (Salop), 135 n. 57
 Prestbury/Sevenhampton (Glos.), 130
 Prosper of Aquitaine, 89
 Prudentius, 85, 89, 93, 93
 psalms and psalters, 77, 85, 89, 92, 93 n. 142, 161, 165
 quadrivium, 84
 Ralf, bishop of Rochester, 27
 Ramsbury, see of, 24, 128, 134
 Ramsey, abbey of, 17, 107, 127
 Ranig, earl of ?Hereford, 170
 Ranulf Flambard, 27
 Rayne (Essex), 145 n. 121, 162
 Reculver (Kent), 139
 Regenbald the Chancellor, 127
Regularis concordia, 83, 115, 195
 and the *Old English Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang*, 76–7
 and the *Rule of St Benedict*, 76
 manuscripts of, 52, 93, 94, 117
 on episcopal power, 46
 use by English monks, 72, 80–2
 relics, 163, 168
 Remigius, bishop of Lincoln, 192, 193 n. 12, 194, 196
 renders, 157, 158, 162
 Rimpton (Som.), 129 n. 30
 Ringwood (Hants.), 148 n. 135
 Ripon (Yorks.), 136 n. 62, 182
 Ripple (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln, 21, 30
 Robert de Limesey, bishop of Coventry, 26
 Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, 21, 24, 62, 66
 Robert, bishop of Hereford, 106, 116
 Rochester, see of, 166–7, 185, 187
 and the Norman Conquest, 194
 diocese, 98 n. 3
 estates, 132–3, 138, 139, 145, 155 n. 176
 lawsuits, 177–8
 life at, 78 n. 53, 79
 liturgical practices, 10
 manuscripts, 111
 spoliation of, 63
 texts, 17, 89
 urban interests, 152
 value of endowment, 126, 133
 Rogationtide, 109, 112, 157, 161
 Roger, earl of Shrewsbury, 135 n. 57
 Romano-German Pontifical (PRG), 54, 95, 114
 Romney (Kent), 179, 180
 Rule of Aachen, 72, 75, 76, 78, 79 n. 56
 Rule of St Benedict, 15, 52, 72, 73, 76–7, 81, 83, 93, 94, 117, 197
 sacramentaries, 114 n. 115
 Sæflæd, 162
 Sæwold, abbot of Bath, 87
 sake and soke, 181–4
 Salcombe Regis (Devon.), 143 n. 113, 149 n. 138
 Salisbury, see of, 80, 194, 195
 Saltwood (Kent), 140 n. 90
 Samson, archbishop of York, 193
 Sandwich (Kent), 140, 159, 182
 Saxlingham (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
 Seasalter (Kent), 181
 Sedgeberrow (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Sedgefield (Durham), 147 n. 129
 Selly Oak (War.), 177
 Selsey (Sussex), 130 n. 31, 140
 Selsey, see of, 184
 diocese, 98 n. 3, 99
 estates, 136, 137
 move to Chichester, 194 n. 19
 urban interests, 152
 Sherborne (Dorset), 133, 134, 153, 179
 Sherborne, see of, 122, 141, 164, 184 n. 186, 187 n. 200
 conversion, 3, 15
 diocese, 129
 estates, 130, 133–4, 137, 141, 142, 143, 146, 179
 library, 89, 196
 manuscripts, 101, 102
 move to Salisbury, 194
 urban interests, 152
 value of endowment, 127
 Sherburn-in-Elmet (Yorks.), 78, 136 n. 62, 145 n. 121
 ship-soke, 187
 Shipston (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Shopland (Essex), 145 n. 118
 Shrewsbury (Salop), 135 n. 57, 152 n. 156
 Sidney Sussex Pontifical, 95, 103, 104
 Sigefr, 173
 Sigeric, archbishop of Canterbury, 62, 111, 170
 Sihtric, abbot of Tavistock, 122
 Siward, ‘bishop’ of St Martin’s, Dover, 170
 Siward, earl of Northumbria, 127
 Smaragdus of St Mihiel, 89, 93
 Snaculf, son of Cytel, 147 n. 129
 Snodland (Kent), 133 n. 45, 177
 soul-scot, 157
 Southery (Norfolk), 148 n. 135
 Southminster (Essex), 145
 Southwell (Notts.), 136 n. 62, 138
 Southwick (Mddx), 151 n. 153
 Sparkwell (Devon.), 149 n. 138
 Spearhavoç, bishop-elect of London, 24–5
 Spirites, 127
 St Albans, abbey of, 10, 17
 St Bertin’s, abbey of, 96
 St Chad’s, Shrewsbury, 135 n. 57
 St German’s, see of (Corn.), 143, 183

Index

- St John's, Chester, 135
 St Martin's, Dover, 121, 155, 170
 St Mary's, Lincoln, 147
 St Marychurch (Devon.), 143 n. 113, 149 n. 138
 St Oswald's Minster (Glos.), 155
 St Osyth (Essex), 133 n. 43, 148 n. 135, 187
 St Peter's, minster of (Glos.), 145 n. 111
 Stafford, 152 n. 156
 Staindrop (Durham), 138 n. 73
 Staines (Surrey), 181
 Stalbridge (Dorset), 133 n. 48, 134 n. 50
 Statius, 90
 Staverton (Devon.), 149 n. 138
 Stephen of Liège, 75
 Stepney (Mddx.), 133 n. 43
 Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, 170, 173, 175
 and North Elmham, 149
 career of, 64–6
 consecrates Harold, 54
 deposed, 192–3
 lordship of, 188–9
 post-Conquest reputation, 20–2, 65
 wealth, 147–8, 182 n. 170, 184
 Stisted (Essex), 129 n. 30, 162, 167
Stockholm Codex Aureus, 166
 Stockton (Wilts.), 129 n. 30, 145 n. 119
 Stoke Canon (Devon.), 143 n. 113
 Stoke Newington (Mddx.), 133 n. 43
 Stoke Priors (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Stoke, South (Oxon.), 136 n. 61
 Stoneham, South (Hants.), 142 n. 102
 Stowe, St Mary's, church of, 78, 80, 174, 179, 189
 Stratford-on-Avon (War.), 134 n. 52, 54,
 Stratton (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
 Styr, son of Ulf, 147 n. 129
 Swein Godwineson, 179
 Swithun, bishop of Winchester, 110, 164
 Symeon of Durham, 28, 34, 74
 synods, 40, 42, 55, 59, 64, 116–21, 195
 Tangmere (Sussex), 129, 140 n. 86
 Tarrington, West (Sussex), 129 n. 27,
 Taunton (Som.), 129, 132, 141, 142, 152 n. 156,
 183, 185, 186
 Tavistock, abbey of, 121–2
Textus Roffensis, 187, 197 n. 39
 Thame (Oxon.), 136 n. 61
 The Naze (Essex), 133 n. 43
 Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, 115
 Theodred, bishop of London, 67, 95, 148, 171
 Thetford, 152 n. 158
 Thetford, see of, 194
 Thierry, abbot of St Évrout, 28, 176
 Thomas I, archbishop of York, 175, 193
 Thomas II, archbishop of York, 193
 Thoræd, 167
 Thorir's father, 188
 Thornage (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
 Thornford (Dorset), 134 n. 50
 Thornham (Norfolk), 143 n. 110
 Thorney, abbey of, 94 n. 148, 161
 Thrym, 172
 Thurkil the White, 170
 Thurstan, 147
 Thurstan, son of Wine, 162, 177, 188–9
 tithes, 157–8
 Tofi the Proud, 170, 172
 Toki, 176
 toll and team, 181–2, 183
 Tostig Godwineson, earl of Northumbria, 64, 66,
 166, 179
 transubstantiation, 119
 Tredington (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
 Tremeurig, bishop of St David's, 122
 trivium, 84
 troopers, 95
 Uhtred, earl of Northumbria, 168 n. 81
 Ulf, 159, 174
 Ulf, bishop of Dorchester, 24, 66, 96
 Ulfgrim, 147
 Up Cerne (Dorset), 133 n. 48
 Up Marden (Sussex), 173
 Venantius Fortunatus, 85
 vernacular, use of, 91–2, 111, 197
 Vikings, 1, 95, 138, 140, 141, 143, 154, 164 n. 51,
 166, 188
Vita Ædwardi Regis, 48, 54
Vitas Patrum, 89
 Walkelin, bishop of Winchester, 194
 Wallingford (Berks.), 151 n. 153, 152 n. 155, n.
 156
 Walter, abbot of Evesham, 175, 196 n. 27
 Waltham Holy Cross, abbey of, 17, 79, 81 n. 75,
 106–7
 Walworth (Surrey), 129 n. 30
 Wanborough (Wilts.), 132 n. 41, 141 n. 96
 Wareham (Dorset), 152 n. 155
 Warkwork (Northants.), 137 n. 67
 Warley, Little (Essex), 179
 Warwick, 152, 152 n. 155, n. 156
 Wellington (Som.), 143 n. 108
 Wells, see of, 17, 183, 184 n. 186
 communal life at, 78, 79
 diocese, 99
 estates, 143–4, 179
 manuscripts, 93, 101, 105
 move to Bath, 194 n. 19
 Wenlock, church of, 80
 Werburgh, wife of Ealdorman Ælfred, 166
 Westbury-on-Trym (Glos.), 134 n. 52, 54
 Westminster, abbey of, 127, 194
 Weston (Dorset), 133 n. 48
 Westwell (Kent), 145 n. 136
 Westwood (Wilts.), 142 n. 103
 Whitchurch (Hants.), 132
 Whitney (Oxon.), 129 n. 28,
 Whittingham (Yorks.), 137 n. 67
 Wick Episcopi (Worcs.), 134 n. 52, 54
 Wickam St Paul's (Essex), 138 n. 72
 William fitz Ansculf, 177
 William of Jumièges, 19
 William of Malmesbury, 33, 122, 164, 176

Index

- William of Malmesbury (cont.)
 and Anglo-Saxon bishops, 17–25, 192
 and the post-Conquest Church, 5–8, 25–8, 30,
 32, 80, 193 n. 12
Gesta Pontificum, 23, 24, 26, 33
Gesta Regum, 18, 23
 in modern works, 32–3
 sources, 9–13, 21, 24
- William of Poitiers, 19, 54
- William the Conqueror, 109
 and Domesday Book, 124
 and episcopal lands, 2, 143
 and the Anglo-Saxon Church, 191
 consecration of, 19, 22, 29
 episcopal appointments, 15, 26, 191, 193
 reputation, 19, 29
- William, bishop of London, 66, 171
- William, bishop of Thetford, 193 n. 11
- Wills, 8, 34, 67, 124, 127, 154, 148, 153, 159, 160,
 161, 162, 163, 167, 168, 169, 172, 173, 174,
 177, 176, 187, 188, 189
- Wilton (Wilts.), 152 n. 155
- Wimbish (Essex), 162, 177
- Winchcombe (Glos.), 152 n. 155, n. 156
- Winchester, 141, 152, 152 n. 155, n. 156, 153,
 171
- Winchester, New Minster, abbey of, 53, 166
- Winchester, see of, 3, 122, 159, 160, 164, 166,
 167, 185, 186, 194
 conversion, 15, 52
 diocese, 128 and n. 23
 estates, 128 and n. 22, 129, 130, 131, 132,
 141–2, 145, 146, 148, 153, 154, 155, 161,
 162, 175
 manuscripts, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 89, 93, 94, 101
 rights of, 183, 184, 185
 urban interests, 152, 171
 value of endowment, 126, 130
- Wingham (Kent), 132
- Wiohstan, 173
- witan, 40, 46–49, 55–61, 63, 67, 103, 116, 124,
 128, 152, 198
- Withington (Glos.), 134 n. 52, 53, 153
- Witney (Oxon.), 142 n. 103
- Wittering (Sussex), 136 n. 60
- Wolverhampton, abbey of, 174
- Wolverley (Worcs.), 134 n. 54
- Woodchester (Glos.), 134 n. 53
- Woodhorn (Durham), 137 n. 67
- Woolstone (Berks.), 128 n. 22, 145 n. 119
- Wooton St Lawrence (Hants.), 145 n. 119
- Worcester, 152, 152 n. 155, n. 156, 161, 181
- Worcester, see of, 3, 173, 184 n. 186, 185
 cartularies, 17
 defense of, 186
 conversion, 15, 71
 diocese, 99
 estates, 130, 134–5, 137, 138–9, 139 n. 75,
 147, 153, 175, 179
 manuscripts, 82, 86, 89, 90, 93, 97, 101, 102,
 103, 111, 117, 118, 160, 196
- Oswaldslow, 182–3
 religious life at, 74
 urban interests, 152, 161
 value of endowment, 127
- Wouldham (Kent), 133 n. 45
- writs, 161, 169, 170, 171, 181, 183–4, 187
- Writtle (Essex), 130
- Wulfgar, 167
- Wulfgeat, 173
- Wulfgyth, 129 n. 30, 162, 167
- Wulfhelm, archbishop of Canterbury, 55–6
- Wulfhun, archbishop of Canterbury, 173
- Wulfric Spot, 127, 174
- Wulfruna, 174
- Wulfsige, bishop of Sherborne, 68 n. 200, 78, 91
 n. 132, 102, 116, 119, 120, 164
- Wulfstan Cantor, 86
- Wulfstan I, archbishop of York, 64, 145
- Wulfstan II, archbishop of York, 106, 108, 116,
 117, 119, 186, 199
Admonitio episcoporum, 40 n. 26
An Admonition to Bishops, 39–40
 and the liturgical life, 72, 74–5
Canons of Edgar, 119, 121
De activa et contemplativa, 45
 early life, 37
Episcopus, 40
 homilies and sermons, 92, 101
 importance of, 36–8
Injunctions on the Behaviour of Bishops, 40–1,
 42
Institutes of Polity, 38–9, 40, 58, 76
 law-codes of, 37, 56–8, 58–9
 manuscripts, 42, 90, 94, 95, 117
 on clerical celibacy, 120
 on clerical duties, 101, 102,
 on penance, 113
 proposed remedies, 38–41, 58–9, 110, 123,
 198
Sermon of the Wolf, 112
 sources, 73, 76, 95
 transmission of ideas, 41–2
- Wulfstan St, bishop of Worcester, 13, 17, 32–3,
 104, 105, 183, 120
 and Harold Godwineson, 66
 as bishop, 103 n. 36, 107, 114–15, 116
 builds new cathedral, 106
 knowledge of law, 175
 manuscripts, 89, 94
 protection of Worcester, 68
 reputation, 22
Vita Sancti Wulfstani, 114, 115, 116, 122
- Wulfstan, bishop of London, 188
- Wulfweard White, 127
- Wulfwig, bishop of Dorchester, 78, 107,
 189
- Wulfwine, 177
- Wybunbury (Ches.), 135 n. 57
- Wye (Kent), 170
- Wymondham (Norfolk), 184
- Wynflæd, 170

Index

- Yarmouth (Norfolk), 150
- Yavington (Hants.), 145 n. 119
- Yetminster (Dorset), 133 n. 47, 154
- York, 137 n. 66, 152, 181
- York, see of, 165, 192–4
 - estates, 130, 136–7, 138, 145, 153, 154, 155
 - jurisdiction, 98–9
 - liberties of, 183
 - library, 89, 91
 - manuscripts, 100
 - urban interests, 152, 181
 - value of endowment, 125, 127

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